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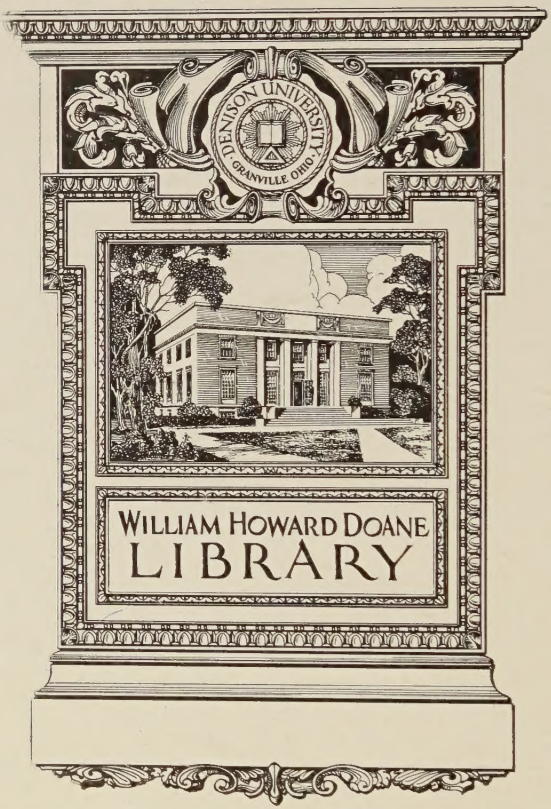

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Roc - Amadour

(*See page 376*)

The SPELL OF FRANCE

BY

Caroline Atwater Mason

Author of

"The Spell of Italy," "The Mystery of Miss Motte," etc.

"Upon thy sun-kissed slopes, on every side
The olive grows, the tree of peace divine,
And all thy lands are crowned with the pride
Of thy prolific, broadly-spreading vines."

— FRÉDÉRIC MISTRAL.

45819.

ILLUSTRATED

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I HAVE travelled in the north of France and through its central plains; there I have found fine coast lines, fertile fields, fair cities, ancient monuments, architectural glories; — endless things, indeed, to awaken admiration and stimulate interest in a high degree. But until I journeyed through the Midi I failed to find that France had power to cast a *spell* upon my mind.

Among the mountains and rivers of *Old France;* among the mighty remains of an earlier civilization; among its legend-haunted castles, churches and abbeys; among fields of olive and vine, and the roses and nightingales of Provence; among the green pastures and sweet waters of the Pyrenees; under the palms and pines and orange groves, the sky and air of the Mediterranean shore, the spell was laid upon me.

C. A. M.

MAP OF SOUTHERN FRANCE

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THE SPELL OF FRANCE

CHAPTER I

A TRYST AT AVIGNON

A SPACIOUS room, with low, heavily timbered ceiling, gleaming white; a rose-coloured carpet reflecting a shade of rose up to the timbers, as here and there a ray of sun filters through the close drawn persiennes of two enormous windows; glints of rose and sun answer back from various mirrors, also from gilded clocks and candlesticks and from deep cushioned crimson armchairs. In the duskiest corners, the room's length apart, stand two tall white beds and on each of these reposes a puffy crimson silk chrysalis. A very non-committal and averted head emerges from the pillow end of one. That is Dolce's head, and Dolce is feigning sleep, this being the hour consecrated to repose in the Midi. From the other

chrysalis, my own, arms are outstretched with a gesture of challenge and disquietude. The figment of sleeping at this crisis I consider overdone.

We are in Avignon and in the Sole Hotel. This does not signify that this hotel makes a specialty of sole, fried or otherwise. It means that it is of the Jean Paul variety, *der einzige*, the only hotel possible in Avignon. Try the others and see. By name it is the Grand Hotel d'Europe. An elegant brochure on the subject informs us that this ancient and " almost historic " house, under the management of M. Guida, from " being smart " has " become perfect; " also that it has all the " shady foliage and family grace that can be desired," the distinguished proprietor having " grand views and wishing to do things well." Of the wines, in which we are not interested, we are told that they " get old quickly," which we judge to be an advantage, and of the cuisine, in which we are interested: — " supervision at every instant and frequent washings make of a spot usually looked upon with suspicion, a miracle of cleanliness, inhabited by cooks moving about before the white porcelain of the walls and flooring."

These interesting details promote confidence and Dolce and I have done little since our arrival in Avignon beyond watching for telegrams which

have not come, and congratulating ourselves upon our penetration in choosing this one-time favourite hostelry of Napoleon I for our trysting place. But at this hour self-gratulation has definitely given way to dread.

And now Dolce makes sign of sincerity. She gives up the pretence of sleep, for I observe that her toes move, at the far end of her chrysalis, in gentle token that if I also wake I need not fear to speak.

"What would you do? What can it mean?" I exclaim with the impetuosity of an hour's suppressed excitement.

Dolce's long delay in answering kindles hope that she is at the moment discovering a clue to our maze. But her answer comes, slowly, impressively, —

"I do not know."

"*Where* do you suppose Hector can be?"

Silence, while we both retrace in our minds the steps leading to the present dilemma.

When Hector and I parted in New York six weeks ago it was with the solemn pact that we should meet on the thirtieth day of April in Carcassonne, at the Hotel Bernard. Should either fail to arrive until May Day, for, to be sure, ships are but boards, sailors but men, and trains in the Midi sometimes belated, the other would

await his coming, or hers, with such calmness as only distance dreams of. Hector's ship was due in Marseilles on the twenty-ninth of April. That was yesterday. To-day is April thirtieth, the trysting day, and we two, Hector's wife (not Andromache but Mrs. Hector) and wife's sister, are in the Grand Hotel d'Europe in Avignon, a day's journey east of Carcassonne, but only two hours north of Marseilles, and great Hector, where is he? Thus far not heard from, although his ship should have touched at Naples three days ago, and at Naples he was pledged to telegraph tidings of his crossing and arrival and announce the time when the ship would make her landing at Marseilles.

But why are we not in Carcassonne? Why are we in a very bad box instead, and Hector perhaps in a worse?

Because, pursuant to our privilege, just ten days ago, we changed our minds, finding that, for at least one hundred and forty-nine and possibly one hundred and fifty reasons, it would be wholly ill-considered to go on to distant Carcassonne for the tryst; that Avignon, hard by Marseilles, was the strategic point.

Now, evidently, unless we intercepted Hector at Naples with announcement of this change of plan, he would, upon landing at Marseilles, make a dash

for the first train west to Carcassonne. To avoid such a contretemps I had sent three different letters of instruction to Naples, addressing Hector under the auspices of every organization which could possibly have knowledge of his movements, except the Camorra. But three days had now passed since he was due in Naples and no word had reached us. Had he failed to receive any or all my letters? Had he failed to keep his promise to telegraph? Were his chariot steeds even now champing their bits at the Hotel Bernard in far Carcassonne? Or was he quoting to himself with some annoyance on the steamer, somewhere between Naples and Marseilles:

"I never *shall* see Carcassonne."

The possibilities complicated themselves endlessly within my brain. Casting off the crimson of my chrysalis, I sprang to the floor and began a hurried toilet, exclaiming with desperation:

"I am going straight down to the office to telegraph the steamship company in Marseilles and ask whether the *Aurora* has given up her stop at Naples on account of cholera, or what has happened."

Dolce murmured that she wondered I had not done this before. I was about to start for the office when a knock came at the door, and an innocent and ineffectual looking slip of pale blue paper

was handed in on a silver tray. A telegram at last! The address was perfectly correct, Mrs. Hector, Grand Hotel d'Europe, Avignon. I tore it open, eager handed, and read, or perceived, the following:

> " *Napoli Gare* 986 13, 4, 28, 8:40
> *Apricord sauset fiur skapr sait Elerum trseth.*"

No signature! No sense! If a cipher, a cipher *sans* key. But what of that? A shout of victory rose to the spotless timbers of the ceiling.

" He has stopped off in Naples! He went to the Gare and telegraphed — something in Russian, I think, and he knows we are not in Carcassonne! "

" Does he know we are here? " asks Dolce anxiously.

" Certainly, for look at the address on this ridiculous despatch, — perfectly accurate that, you see, ' Hotel d'Europe, Avignon.' How could he know that address if my letters had not reached him? "

Dolce's long, wavy hair, which she had been combing out, fairly crinkled with conviction. Our heads together over the hopeless hieroglyphics of the despatch, we discerned a ray of meaning

in the first word, " Apricord," which being interpreted, Dolce believed might stand for " Arrived," and in the final " trseth," I suddenly detected a valiant dash at *thirtieth.*

With ardour we completed our toilet, both feeling Hector hard upon the trail, properly enthusiastic toward him and the tryst, but a shade pensive and wistful as we realized that for Dolce and me Hector's coming spelled parting and spelled it correctly. I was entitled, according to all the schedules of the spring and summer, to lead about on this happy journey a sister *or* a spouse, but I was not entitled to both. Other devotees of Dolce were clamouring for her to keep a tryst with them in Brittany as soon as Hector's arrival in France made it possible for her to leave me. I admitted to being of a grasping disposition. I greedily desired both sister and spouse, but in vain. In the very way in which Dolce inserted her brushes in her dressing case and her alcohol lamp into its sheath, I read " Abdication."

Hector was at the door. The tryst was kept. Twenty-five minutes we devoted to being rapturous and reunited. Then we grew calm and presented the telegram to Hector for a critical, textual reading. It was given, with marginal notes, and it ran as follows:

"Arrived safely day late, yours received. Meet Avignon thirtieth."

This is what may be expected when a despatch is given in English to a Neapolitan operator to be delivered in France. Moral: Vive l'Esperanto!

That evening, there being glorious moonlight, we spent at the foot of the colossal Calvary in front of the Cathedral, watching the cloud shadows passing across the façade of the Papal Palace. It was an hour of curious and contrasting impressions, but they belong to another chapter.

CHAPTER II

AN ANCIENT PORTAL AND A SEAT OF CAESARS

AFTER a day of quiet knitting up of the ravelled sleeve of separation in our rose-coloured chambers, at Avignon, Hector and I journeyed up the Rhone Valley to Lyons with Dolce, whom we sped thence on her journey northward. Circumstances, wet weather and its noisy modernity combined to drive us from Lyons, after but a day's sojourn, back to Avignon, which had now acquired the complexion of intimacy to our minds, so short is the traveller's perspective.

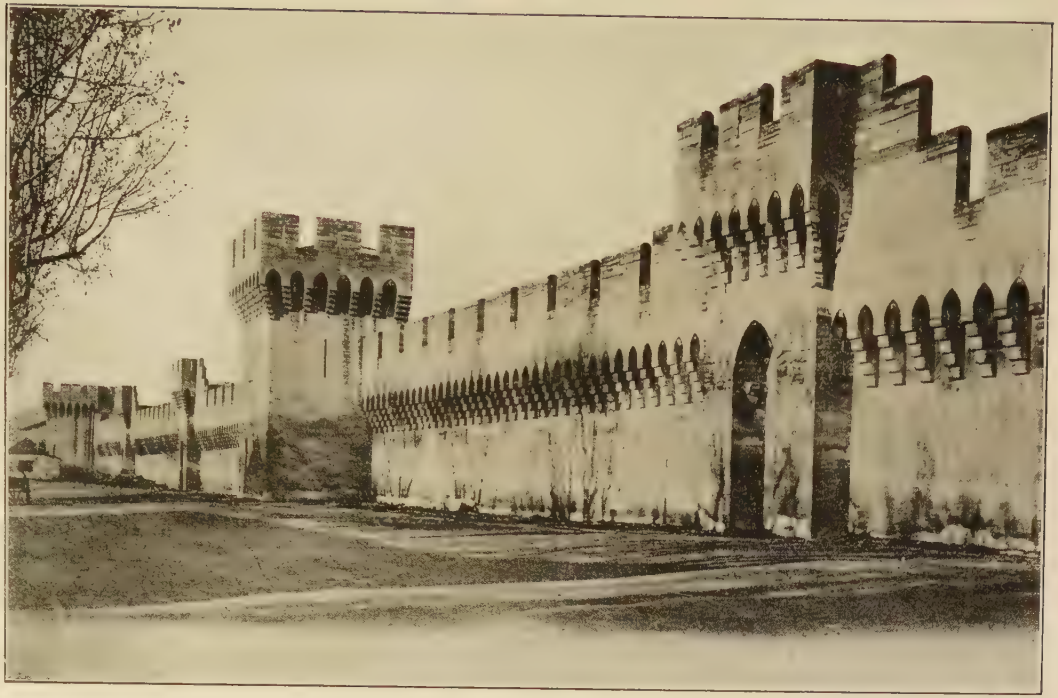
But while Lyons of to-day, handsome, prosperous, bustling, did not hold us long and our chief finding there was summed up in the Claudian Tablets in the Palais St. Pierre, the Church of St. Martin d'Ainay and some charming old houses in the Rue St. Jean, Lyons of the past, invisible but potent, held us long and holds us still. But we preferred returning to Avignon to study its manifold significance. For Avignon, within its

mediaeval ramparts, dreaming its own dream of past greatness, unawakened still by the modern spirit, suits better than Lyons to the temper of withdrawal from the life of the present.

By this time Hector had been definitively rechristened "M'sieur," his American name presenting insurmountable obstacles to the French nation, and as such he will henceforth figure in these chronicles. M'sieur and I, once more established in Avignon, then, turned deliberately (with a smothered sigh on my part, I cannot deny, for the dear days with Dolce, of insouciant dawdling) to the main contention of my present journeying, that being to make somewhat studious acquaintance with Old France, which is to say, with France of the Midi.

"Now, M'sieur," I began, as we drew our chairs to a blazing hearth fire in our wide and spotless chamber, dinner over, the *mistral* sweeping gusts of chilly spring rain against the closed casements, "let us begin with oldest old France. Let us proceed to get to the bottom of things, or, shall we say, to *orientire* ourselves. Speak, and tell me, — where did France begin, and when? Was it when Caesar divided all Gaul into three parts?"

"Oh, no. That is modern history, comparatively. France has the usual misty, aboriginal period of wandering, barbarous tribes, of Iberi-



RAMPARTS OF AVIGNON.

ans, Kymrians, Gauls and Celts; the people who write no annals, and leave no memorials."

"Then they are prehistoric and uncivilized. I refuse to put the strain upon my intellect of struggling with them."

"If it is civilization you are seeking, it begins far back and with the East as usual. Phoenician traders from ancient Carthage and from Tyre frequented the mouths of the Rhone about the time that Rome was founded. They established various commercial stations in this part of France, notably on the site of Nimes, and builded a road which skirted the Mediterranean and even crossed the Alps into Italy. For centuries this road remained the great artery of trade, and under the Romans was styled the *Via Domitia*."

"Then Nimes is perhaps the very oldest city in France, not Roman Nemausus but a still older Phoenician Nimes."

"Perhaps, but its origins are disputed and hazy. Marseilles, the gate through which I have just entered France, really bears off the palm for an accredited history of highest antiquity. Its foundation was only a century or two later than that of Rome."

"Was Marseilles a Phoenician settlement?"

"No. The Phoenicians began to decline in the seventh century B. C. and about the year 600

they made room in Gaul for Greeks from Asia Minor, who brought with them their own immeasurably superior civilization and learning. Euxenes, the founder of Marseilles, is a mighty interesting character and ought to have more place in the popular mind than he appears to have."

"Surely you did not have time while you were in Marseilles to make the acquaintance of Euxenes, but he appears to be an old friend of yours. Where did you meet him?"

"He was a seafaring hero, so I met him appropriately enough on the ocean. I brought a lot of French books along, you see, and studied a bit on the ship into origins and beginnings, for the sake of my peace of mind on our wanderings. You know how I dislike mental fogs."

"How clever of you! I, too, have not been idle, but I lean, myself, to the Mediaeval and the Romantic, you know, and I am shockingly ignorant about all this Greek occupation. I supposed Marseilles to be a perfectly uninteresting modern city, about like Lyons."

"I think it is very much like Lyons in this way, that it has an enormously ancient and important part in history, but has very little to show for the fact, and in its present aspect is thoroughly modern, commercial and mediocre. To be sure I did not stop to see much of it, as I took the train

for Avignon three hours after landing, but I drove around enough to get a general impression."

"Please return to Euxenes."

"Delighted! You flatter me by the attention you give my mushroom learning. Euxenes was a Greek, a trader of an Ionian town called Phocea, who sailed out into the west once upon a time, about the year B. C. 600, — some little time ago, you observe, — landed in a bay near the Rhone mouths and met a pretty Gallic girl named Gyptis. Gyptis was daughter of an important chief in the neighbourhood, and was about to be married to a Gaul. It seems to have been rather a Young Lochinvar romance, but Gyptis, instead of blushing and sighing, took the initiative, for at the wedding feast, when it was her part to hand a symbolic cup of wine to the man she chose for husband, she passed by the expectant Gallic youth and gave the cup to Euxenes, the Greek."

"No doubt it was his profile."

"Possibly. The surprising part of the story is that the Gallic chief, Gyptis's father, seems to have been as much ruled by his daughter as any American father nowadays. He followed her lead, and took Euxenes obediently for son-in-law."

"Are they reported to have lived happily ever after?"

"Prosperously, at least. Euxenes was enter-

prising in the last degree. He might have come from Chicago, instead of Asia Minor, by the way he set instantly to work to promote a new town on the territory which his father-in-law gave him. He sent ships back to Phocea to bring out a body of colonists, and while the service was not by express steamers, the round trip requiring nearly a year, they seemed to have time enough for everything in those days."

"I suppose Euxenes and Gyptis would have been glad to have a year's grace before the strenuous life began."

"Well, when the galleys came from Phocea, they brought not only a courageous band of settlers, but a very interesting cargo, it seemed to me when I read of it on the *Aurora*. For instance, there were quantities of seeds and of olive and vine cuttings, all sorts of utensils, both for war and agriculture, and, being pious you see, as well as enterprising, the colonists brought along a statue of Diana and a priestess, both borrowed, I believe, from Ephesus."

"How real, and yet how utterly unreal it sounds! The olive cuttings, and the priestess and image of Diana! So much like the pilgrims in the 'Mayflower,' with a difference! Do you know, I like it immensely? And was all this to found Marseilles?"

" Yes, or Massilia, as the Greeks called it. It grew at an amazing rate under the control of Euxenes, and later great numbers of political refugees from Phocea emigrated to Gaul, and joined the new colony. Massilia became literally a colony rather than simply an important city, for after the middle of the sixth century, B. C., she sent out and founded settlements far and wide, and most of these are towns of some importance to-day. Just think! Monaco, Nice, Antibes, and other places we have heard much of along the Riviera, were Massilian trading stations, and these towns up the Rhone Valley, like Avignon and Arles, were really made places of consequence by the Greek merchants and commerce of Marseilles, and that, away back more than five hundred years before Christ."

" I never had the least idea of all this, M'sieur. Marseilles and old Rome almost contemporary! Paris seems but of yesterday in comparison. It was certainly hundreds of years before it became a city of consequence. I look upon Marseilles with new interest and respect."

" Yes, but all the same if you were to go there you would be disappointed, as you were yesterday in Lyons, because there seems nothing left to tell the tale of that ancient greatness."

" The antiquity is too antique to have re-

mained until now, — is it not so? Nothing so old as that has lasted, out of Egypt," I reflected.

"And a few Etruscan tombs," added M'sieur.

We were silent for a moment, the thoughts of both of us reverting to our well beloved *bella Italia*. Could any land exert over us an equal spell? The question arose.

"I have been in France such a little while," I began slowly, "and I had very little idea what its appeal would be, but I am already amazed at the antiquity of the civilization here in the South, at the magnificence of such memorials as we saw in Orange yesterday, at so many things which I supposed one must go to Italy to find. M'sieur, I am fired with the idea that we shall become as enamoured of old France as we are of Italy. I feel it coming. There is such a depth and such a manifoldness in the story of these towns of old Provence; such richness of the early Roman remains as you really hardly find in Italy itself, outside the great museums. I know for I have been reading of what we are to see in Arles. Think, too, of those Claudian Tablets in Lyons! Think of the glorious army of Christian saints and martyrs of Lyonesse! Then add the armies of knights-crusaders, the Papal excitements, Philip le Bel and Boniface with the Avignon regime, and all the Albigensian story with the

Troubadours and King René thrown in, all woven in and out of these valleys and plains here around us! If it doesn't thrill you, M'sieur — " I broke off out of breath.

" I shall be unthrillable, *n'est ce pas?* " returned my husband, who was taking a whiff of the *mistral* at the window. " No, I am all for old France, I assure you, and especially for Avignon, which we shall really attack to-morrow I hope. Now let us work over Lyons the rest of the evening, and see what we can construct out of this material," and my husband indicated the large disorder of books, papers, maps, monographs and the like, with which our table was covered.

As a result of that and other evenings' study we framed for our own satisfaction the following brief survey of some parts of the very typical history of Lyons.

The story begins with Marseilles (Massilia), the proper place to begin the study of earliest French history. The colony founded by Euxenes in 600 B. C. grew powerful and influential as the centuries went on. Among other settlements established by it among the barbarian tribes was that farther to the north called *Lugdunum*, at the junction of the Rhone and Saône. This station, founded early in Massilian history, failed to achieve any marked importance until after the

beginning of the Christian era, but the magnificent site of the Lyons of our day was thus held for civilization, awaiting the great future masters of Gaul, the Romans, for its development. Here seems to be the point in the story, when, as in the story of every nation of the Mediterranean littoral, we must cry *Ave Roma, immortalis!* For the Greek influence, which had spread across all Gaul and even up into the mountain fastnesses of the Tyrol, was about to be superseded by the world conqueror.

We need not turn back and re-read our Caesar to know that in the year 58 B. C. and long before that, Rome possessed a powerful province, Narbonensis, in Southern Gaul, and was reaching out determined hands to rob the barbarous tribes of their fair lands to the north and west. How had this happened?

As it always happened. Rome, strong, resourceful, had been called upon for protection and help by a weaker state, had generously and effectually responded, and, a foothold once gained, had gone on to enrich herself and plant the Roman eagles on new soil.

Massilia had, early in its history, formed alliance and treaties with Rome. When Hannibal with his great army, 218 B. C., traversed Spain, crossed the Pyrenees, and marched across South-

ern Gaul by the old Phoenician road, on his way to invade Italy, the Gallic tribes had shown themselves his friends, but Massilia had held aloof as the ally of the foe of the Carthaginian. Rome was grateful. To quote from M. Guizot:

"She granted the Massilians a place among her senators at the feast of the Republic, and exemption from all duty in her ports. Towards the middle of the second century B. C. Marseilles was at war with certain Gallic tribes, her neighbours, whose territory she coveted. Two of her colonies, Nice and Antibes, were threatened. She called on Rome for help. A Roman deputation went to decide the quarrel; but the Gauls refused to obey its summons and treated it with insolence. The deputation returned with an army," (note, the first Roman army to enter the realm now constituting France) "succeeded in beating the refractory tribes, and gave their land to the Massilians. The same thing occurred repeatedly with the same result. Within the space of thirty years nearly all the tribes between the Rhone and the Var, in the country which was afterwards Provence, were subdued and driven back among the mountains" (those which we now know as the Alpes Maritimes) "with notice not to approach within a mile of the coast in general, and a mile and a half of the places of disembarkation."

So far in the interests of Marseilles! But the camel had pushed his nose skilfully into the tent. The next step was for the Roman consul, Sextius, in charge of operations, to construct, about the year 122 B. C. a residence for himself and his suite at the north of Marseilles. For this purpose, with the characteristic Roman penchant for baths, he chose a spot in the wooded hills rich in thermal springs. This town, which Sextius in his own honour named *Aquae Sextiae*, we know as Aix.

Accordingly we must do some mild homage to dull and dusty little Aix, as the first Roman city in France.

After this the camel edged his way into the tent rapidly. There was much fighting between the natives and Rome, as, for example, here just above Avignon, even then a town of importance, at the confluence of the Rhone and the Sorgue, in the year 121 B. C. The Romans uniformly won their battles and quietly annexed to their growing consular province the lands of the conquered, and thriving towns like Vienne, particularly in the Rhone Valley, sprang rapidly into life. In the year 115 B. C. Narbonne, called *Narbo* by the Romans, was made the seat of government of *the Province*, styled Narbonensis, but more commonly known as *Provincia*. It comprised the territory between the Alps and the Pyrenees east and

west, and between Lake Geneva and the Mediterranean north and south, including the Rhone Valley, but excluding Marseilles, which remained *civitas libera* until conquered by Julius Caesar, 49 B. C. "Without Massilia," to use the words of Cicero, "Rome had never triumphed over the Transalpine nations," but her glory was of the Greek, not of the Roman genius, and from this time on her importance fades before the rising power of Lugdunum (Lyons).

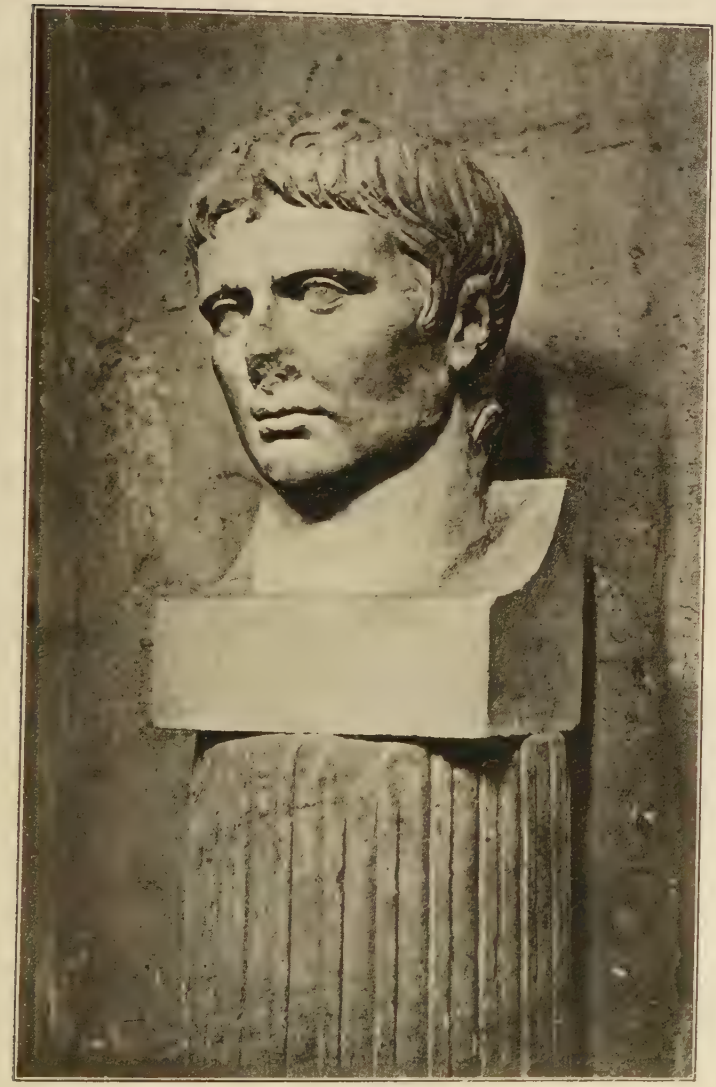
In the year 58 B. C., as most of us have read at some period, more or less remote, the Roman consul, Julius Caesar, was appointed Governor of Gallia. Finding many and important tribes in revolt and fresh hordes of foreign barbarians threatening colonization on Roman territory, he began those Gallic campaigns, which, in eight years, immortalized his name. In the year 50 B. C. Caesar's conquest of his *omnis Gallia* was complete. Gallia was Roman, and remained Roman for five centuries, the cities, however, retaining at first their laws and their local governments.

That Caesar's genius recognized the high quality of the people he had conquered is shown in many ways; picturesquely enough in his special Gallic legion, called *Alauda* (lark) "because it bore on the helmets a lark with outspread wings, the symbol of wakefulness." His fear of the valour

and resistance of the Gauls seems proven by the ruthless punishment of the great Avernian hero, Vercingetorix, in whose rebellion we hear the "grand voice of an expiring country."

Leaving Gallia for the last time, Caesar established colonies at Arles and at Fréjus. The latter he named *Forum Julii*, and of it he purposed to make a maritime city equal in importance to Marseilles. It was after he returned to Rome that Caesar declared, "There are no more Gauls." The sight of the humiliated chieftain, Vercingetorix, led in chains along the Via Sacra to embellish his conqueror's triumph, must have added reality to the tragic boast.

After Julius, Augustus Caesar; after conquest, pacification and reconstruction. In the year 27 B. C. Augustus visited Gallia and made Lugdunum his imperial residence while engaged in the labour of organizing Rome's new possessions. Under his hands Gallia north of the *Provincia Romana* was divided into three provinces: Aquitania north of the Pyrenees, extending to the Loire, with Tolosa (Toulouse) for chief city; north of Aquitania, Lugdunensis, stretching northward to the Channel and covering the great central plains between the Loire and the Seine, having the now illustrious city of Lugdunum for capital; and, eastward to the river Rhine, Gallia Belgica.



BUST OF AUGUSTUS CAESAR, ARLES.

Lugdunum, or Lyons, as it is simpler to call it, now became the centre of the Gallic imperial administration. From out the city, in which Augustus had his seat and in which centred the majesty of Rome, four great military highways extended to the Ocean, to the Rhine, to the Channel and along the Rhone and the Mediterranean coast, to the Pyrenees. Its temples, aqueducts and theatre, its senate, made it a Gallic Rome.

In the year 10 B. C. Drusus, adopted son of Augustus, was in Lyons, conducting a solemn festival connected with dedicating a "magnificent monument raised, at the confluence of the Rhone and Saône, in honour of Rome and Augustus as the tutelary deities of Gaul." In the midst of the stately ceremonies it was announced that a son had just been born to Drusus in the imperial palace of the city, where his wife, Antonia, daughter of Mark Antony, was in residence. This son, fifty years later, became the Roman Emperor, Claudius.

Between Augustus and Claudius we have as Emperors Tiberius and Caligula, under whom Lyons remained the centre of the imperial administration in Gallia, and under whom, as initiated powerfully by Augustus, the work of Romanizing Gallia socially, politically, religiously, went forward without a shadow of turning. The native

Druid worship was attacked and suppressed, the cult of Mars, of Apollo and of Diana being substituted. The Roman language and learning were imposed upon the conquered cities and the schools of Vienne and Lyons, in common with others, rivalled in lustre those of Greece and Italy. In agriculture Gallic methods and products were superseded by the Roman culture of the olive, vine and flax; in sculpture and architecture, the Roman genius, flourishing upon the vigorous virgin soil, displayed itself with even exuberant splendour, as a week spent in the cities of Old Provence must testify.

In the year 41 A. D. (note that we have now passed the date of the birth of Jesus Christ and that a new, albeit a silent and invisible influence is at work in the Roman Empire) there came to the throne of Imperial Rome the son of Drusus, native and citizen of Lyons, as was his brother Germanicus, and as his successors, Marcus Aurelius and Caracalla, were to be. This "shadow of a man," as Claudius's own mother called him, with many deficiencies and much discreditable in his character, possessed a singular breadth of vision in things political, and, at times, unmistakable elevation of mind. It was the glory of Claudius that, reversing the policy of Augustus, he strove to make true and equal Roman citizens of the

natives of the provinces. In accordance with this purpose, he had bestowed every Roman right and privilege upon the city of Lyons, had made of it "*the* colony super-eminently, the great municipal town of the Gauls, the Claudian town," while Paris (Lutetia) was still a rude and rural township.

Claudius proceeded now to propose for all free men of Imperial Gaul the same privileges enjoyed by the citizens of Lyons, primarily the right of entering the Roman Senate and holding major public offices. The speech delivered by Claudius urging this proposal in the Senate has been summarized by Tacitus, but much of it has been more vitally preserved in an inscription on bronze tablets, the fragments of which were discovered in Lyons, in 1528. This famous memorial is now to be seen, a magnificent testimony to a magnificent policy, in the Palais St. Pierre.

I believe that no remnant of the Gallo-Roman period, not even the beautiful Arch of Triumph which we visited at Orange, supposedly erected in 21 A. D. by Tiberius, nor the majestic theatres and amphitheatres scattered throughout Provence, have borne to my mind the sense of Rome's dominion as the corner stone of French civilization, which was conveyed by these tablets of Claudius.

Not far from the year 60 A. D., a few years before the burning of Rome, Lyons was devastated by a great fire. Allusion is found to this event in a letter of Seneca's, in which he says:

"Lugdunum, which was one of the show places of Gaul, is sought for in vain to-day; a single night sufficed for the disappearance of a vast city; it perished in less time than it takes to tell the tale."

Nero contributed more than 30,000 l. to the rebuilding of the imperial city. The slopes of the Saône known to us as the Fourvières, and now crowned by the massive church of Notre Dame, was the site of the Roman metropolis.

Twenty miles south of Lyons lies Vienne, the Vienna Allobrogum of the Romans, and in the second century B. C. already capital of a district. Under Claudius, Vienne doubtless occupied the part of a suburb of Lyons and in it he built the Corinthian Temple of Augustus and Livia, about the year 41 A. D., which all travellers to-day compare with the exquisite Maison Carrée at Nimes. But the worship of Augustus, succeeding the strange rites of Druidism, was soon to be undermined by a religion of universal, not national authority, its authority dwelling within the heart of man, not in the ambition of the rulers of men.

Through the ancient portal of Marseilles, Greeks from Asia Minor again brought the new leaven into

Gallia which was to make all things new and initiate modern history. In the year 52 A. D. Claudius is known to have driven out of Rome the Jews who followed "one Chrestus." After the destruction by Titus of Jerusalem, A. D. 71, we know that the Christians were widely scattered, and a century later we find in Vienne and Lyons a regularly organized Christian Church. Its bishop, St. Pothinus, according to tradition, had been sent to Gallia by St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, himself a disciple of St. John.

Under Pothinus the twin churches of Vienne and Lyons became the seed bed of the new religion, and the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. But fierce and fiery trials awaited the infant church, for with the beginning of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, 161, the fifth of the great historic Roman persecutions broke loose in Gallia, and in Lyons and Vienne were found the first Gallic Christians to suffer martyrdom. The names of the young girl Blandina, of Ponticus, a youth of fifteen, and of St. Pothinus, the venerable bishop of ninety years, possess undying lustre in the story of the Church; but in the eighteen years of the persecution under Marcus Aurelius, hundreds of nameless martyrs witnessed a good confession, hundreds of whom the world was not worthy.

I cannot resist the impulse to present here a

print of a bronze statue seen later in Toulouse, representing a boy dying, a young Christian martyr of this period; it might have been Ponticus, companion of Blandina. The simple pathos of the figure was to me irresistible. Artless, child-like in its submissiveness, ideal in its innocence yet undauntedly firm, the crossed hands, the slender, relaxed frame, the patient droop of the head, were all poignantly appealing. After spending weeks in the study of the tremendous pagan monuments of France, and in admiration of the voluptuous and haughty beauty of its Graeco-Roman marbles, the sign of a new cult embodied in this childish form was significant and suggestive in a high degree. That a boy like this ventured to oppose his puny strength, the frail emotion of a new hope and a new love just awakened to life in his child heart, to the whole proud system of Rome's worship and law, that he should even dare to die, — how hopeless, how like futile folly it must have seemed in that year of grace 177 A. D.! And yet it was the child's faith and love which conquered, and the Roman pride and power which fell!

The immortal letter[1] sent by the church of Vienne and Lyons to their brethren in Christ in Asia Minor and preserved by Eusebius, records

[1] The text of this letter will be found at the end of this volume.

YOUNG CHRISTIAN MARTYR OF GALLIA.

the first martyrdoms and gives sublime reality to the force of divine love and faith new-born in the hearts of the humble.

This force did not spend itself in the agonies of the martyrdom, but rather gathered with new purpose and determination. St. Pothinus, as Bishop of Lyons, was succeeded by a parish priest of the same diocese, Irenaeus. Under the rule of this illustrious saint, missionaries of the Cross traversed the whole of Gallia, preaching and establishing churches. Among these early evangelists, notable in the Midi, were St. Trophimus, the missioner to Arles, St. Saturninus to Toulouse, St. Paul to Narbonne. The mission of these Gallo-Roman saints of the third century is historic, but dearer far to the heart of the Provençal is the old tradition of the evangelization of their country, which is given as follows by Mistral, the great poet of Provence, in his notes to his masterpiece, "Mireille:"

"The Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer (in Provençal *Li Santo*) is a little town of five hundred and forty-three inhabitants, situated in the Isle of Camargue, by the sea, between the mouths of the Rhone. A venerable and poetic legend draws thither on the twenty-fifth of May of each year from all points in Provence and Bas-Languedoc, an innumerable throng of pilgrims.

"The legend recounts that after the death of Christ the Jews constrained certain of the most fervent of His followers to board a dismantled vessel and deliver themselves to the mercy of the waves. The scene is thus described in an ancient French canticle:

"Enter, Sara, in the vessel,
Lazarus, Martha, Maximin,
Cléon, Trophimus, Saturnin,
The three Maries and Marcelle,
Eutrope and Martial, Joseph with Sidonia,
You shall perish in the ship.

"Without sail and without cordage,
Without anchor, mast or oar,
Without rudder or provisions,
Go to make your shipwreck sure!
Let us rest in peace without you,
Go to die amid the waves!"

"Conducted by Providence, the bark touched the shore of Provence at the extremity of the Isle of Camargue. The poor exiles, miraculously delivered from the perils of the sea, dispersed throughout Southern Gaul and became the first apostles. Mary Magdalene, one of the three Maries, withdrew to the desert of Sainte-Baume, to weep there for her sins. The two others and St. John the Evangelist, accompanied by their servant, Sara, after having converted the people of the region to the new faith, returned to the place of their landing, to die."

The Church of the Saintes Maries contains the relics of the two Maries and, in the crypt, the tomb of their servant, Sara.

St. Martha became the patron saint of Tarascon and a little north of Marseilles a rock is shown where she is said to have rested on her way to visit her sister, Mary Magdalene, at the Sainte-Baume.

These legends make warp and woof of the life and thought of Provence in the Middle Ages, but the true central sources of Gallic civilization and Christianization are Massilia, the ancient Greek portal into France, and Lugdunum, the Seat of the Caesars.

CHAPTER III

THE ROCK OF AVIGNON

"NOW good-bye to the Classic and the Antique," I cried, as we sallied out of the shaded *cours* of our hotel in the Place Crillon in the May morning, "and hail to the Romantic, the Mediaeval — in short, the Credible!"

"Then, after all you don't believe in the Greeks and Romans," commented M'sieur.

"Yes, but I believe even more in that Louis Quinze moutardière," I replied, for we were now turning the corner into the Rue Joseph Vernet and, as usual, I found it impossible to pass the Old Curiosity Shop without a pause in which to covet my neighbour's goods.

"And only look once at that piece of ecclesiastical lace! Certainly Avignon has fascinating Antikkitay shops! But how grim and grey the street is, someway, how dull and lifeless even of this lovely May morning."

"We do not hear echoes of the dances and the

many bells with which Avignon is always associated, but you can see things are getting a little livelier already." This was said as we ascended the Rue St. Agricol towards the Place de l'Hotel de Ville, into which we presently emerged.

The French town of the Midi, — how familiar we were growing with its sure signs, its unfailing hall-marks! Here were they again: the white, dusty street, the broad, arid, grassless Place with its inevitable platane trees; the wooden seats beneath; the black-bloused schoolboys, the fat and wrinkled market women; the pallid, black-bearded clerks, all hastening to business; the Place flanked on either side by cafés of the boulevard variety under their awnings; the pavement before them thick sown with small tables and chairs, sickly over-nightish garçons in shabby dress-suits, holding napkins of uninviting aspect over the arm, on the now uncrossed thresholds; up at the head of the Place a big and flamboyant piece of politico-symbolic sculpture; somewhere in the background a pillared Hotel de Ville, and a theatre; everywhere in the foreground tram-cars and omnibuses, and small kiosks where newspapers and pink novelettes curl up dusty leaves in the wind. Could this be Avignon, that city whose name had seemed to me always ringing with romance, redolent of charm? Was it, after all,

dull, modern, shabby, like other towns of the Midi?

Passing under the great monument of the Centenaire, seeking in vain to look at it intelligently, we made our way up a steep and stony lane. A certain heavy respectability and ponderous elegance invested the buildings on either side, at the left being the Banque de France, but a few steps brought us out into another enormous square, silent, deserted at this hour and severed by a gulf from the banalities of the Place de l'Hotel de Ville. In that gulf were sunk at least six centuries.

We were in the Place du Palais, seen hitherto only by moonlight, and therefore conveying at this moment the impression of entire novelty. Passing the Renaissance Hotel des Monnaies, with its decorations of mammoth garlands, we hurried to one of the stone benches placed below a melancholy line of platanes and sitting down in silence, our backs to the Rhone Valley, fixed our eyes on the grimly imposing structure which is Avignon, the Palace of the Popes. The stretch of the façade, increased in its effect of length by its closeness to the Cathedral, impressed me as the most enormous mediaeval fortification I had ever seen. (I had not then seen Carcassonne.) For a fortress, rather than a palace is the aspect to-day of this formidable pile. It was built, as we have since

found several churches in the Midi built (notably the Cathedral of Albi), secondarily if not primarily for defence; and strength rather than grace, massiveness rather than beauty, constitutes its undeniable charm. Of ornament there is none, save that afforded by the crenelations which cut the blue of the sky with intense distinctness, the machicolations of the Tower de la Campane and the restored corbels of the main portal and of the charming tourelle flanking it. The lofty, pointed arches of the façade, however, break its severity, shallow though they are, and the mellow tone of the stone, the hue which Stendhal described as "the uniform tint of a dry leaf," is singularly pleasing to the eye.

"I am glad we saw it first by moonlight," I remarked after time had been given to the silence which the sternness of the scene forcibly imposes.

"Yes, there is not sufficient shadow by day," replied M'sieur reflectively; "the whole façade is flat and lacks relief in this morning light, but as we saw it first those buttresses seemed to cast deep shadows, you remember."

"If it were less massive, less colossal, one might now almost call it featureless. Do you recall those words of Gregorovius? 'The Avignon Vatican, built on the rock of the Cathedral, one of the strongest monuments of the Middle Ages, still

stands with its lofty towers and battlements, gloomy and ponderous, but empty and lifeless as the tomb of a Pharaoh.' "

" How very good and what it is to have your verbal memory!" commented M'sieur. " As always, Gregorovious is exact. ' Built on the rock of the Cathedral ' is his phrase, and it is precise. Clement V, the first Avignonese Pope, had no house of his own but was the guest of the Dominican convent throughout his pontificate. His successor, old John XXII, was already Bishop of Avignon when elected Pope. The Cathedral yonder on its rock was his church and his episcopal palace adjoined it. He simply enlarged and fortified his own rock-founded dwelling, and used a small, ancient church, which was then tucked in between the Cathedral and the Palace, for his pontifical chapel. John died one of the richest of popes, — the ' Midas of Avignon.' "

" I suppose he would not have been generous enough to build on this mighty scale. Do you remember who were the chief builders of this tremendous pile? "

" Benedict XII and Clement VI, I think, but what do you say to hunting up the tomb of John XXII in his Cathedral? The Cathedral is older than the Palace, and so it seems logical to visit it first."

THE CALVARY, AVIGNON.

"I do not find it impressive from this point with that startling gilded Virgin on the top of the tower; but whatever critics say of it, I love the Calvary."

"I think the whole entourage induces a peculiar reverence," returned M'sieur, "it possesses a consistent dignity: that sombre, heavy foliage of pine and laurel of the *Rocher des Doms;* then the *brave Crillon*, facing down so doughtily the great monuments of the past; beyond, over there, the old Archbishop's Palace; then, west, the Rhone and its glorious valley — yes, the whole *mise en scene* here is very great."

"It makes a very good understudy to the Piazza of St. Peter's in Rome," I remarked.

"Yes, and doesn't it also remind you, in a certain fashion, of the Piazza San Lorenzo in Viterbo?"

"Oh, that little square before the Palazzo Papale, where Adrian — what number was he? — made old Friedrich Barbarossa hold his stirrup? I remember it now perfectly."

"Then you recall the Gothic loggia of the Palazzo where the newly elected popes used to come out to bless the people?"

"Why, Viterbo was a species of Italian Avignon, was it not? How many popes were elected there?"

"Three, all in the thirteenth century. Here seven popes and two anti-popes were elected, all in the fourteenth century. And, by the way, the Calvary you like up there is the point where these popes stood to give their benediction when newly elected."

"Is it really? What a scene it must have made, with this great Place thronged with the multitude and all the bells in all the belfries ringing! Then it must have really been Rabelais' '*L'Isle sonnante.*' But come; we must begin to explore or the day will be gone before we know it. Only, — I do not wish to visit the interior of the Palace this morning."

We had both risen and, as we crossed the pavement of the wide Place, I added:

"I have a curious sense that I must learn to bear the exterior first."

"What can you mean?"

"You know perfectly well, only you would put it otherwise. It is the realization of a thing; always an experience. Until this moment I never *believed* that the Popes of Rome lived and ruled Christendom away off in Provence. I took the Babylonish Captivity as a species of historical stage property, don't you know, but it always seemed mythical. Even the other night this place was utterly unreal in the moonlight, perhaps

rather more improbable than before I saw it at all."

"But the sober light of common day at nine o'clock in the morning has convinced you that in the fourteenth century, under the influence of the King of France, Philip le Bel, the seat of the Papacy was actually removed from Italy to France, from the banks of the Tiber to the banks of the Rhone, and there remained for seventy years? Well, that proves you out and out an Intuitionist. The effect is absolutely without logical cause."

"Women are always intuitionist. That is what makes them interesting."

"I think their habit of carrying a bag with them wherever they go is even more interesting. What is in this to make it so heavy?"

"Hare's Southeastern France, for one thing, and Hare recommends the view from the garden on the summit over there, — the *Rocher des Doms*. Let us find our way up there, first of all, then visit the Cathedral and keep that perfectly overpowering Palais des Papes for to-morrow."

Crossing the place before the statue of Henri IV's "*brave Crillon*," we met a fine old abbé of whom we asked the easy way to ascend to the summit of the Rock. Thence we went on our way up through closely shaded avenues, past little lakes where swans broke the gloom with their

gleaming plumage. Soon we came out upon the balustraded crest of the great bluff, and there burst upon us the magnificent prospect of the Rhone, flowing through its green, flat meadows, past the broken bridge of St. Benezet, and the opposite tower of Philip le Bel, Villeneuve and its vast chateau rising beyond the river and level meads. To the northeast were the faint outlines of Mont Ventoux, and other mountain shapes, and the whole scene was bathed in the glowing light and the enchanting air of a Provençal May morning.

Mistral is irresistible at this point. I wandered everywhere with a small volume of his poetry in my pocket and M'sieur and I made this rough sketch into English of some lines from his unrhymed "Poem of the Rhone:"

"It is Avignon and the Palace of the Popes! Avignon! Avignon on its giant rock! Avignon, ringing with joy, which, one after another lifts the spires of its belfries *tout semés* with garlands; Avignon, god-child of St. Peter, which sees the Bark at anchor in its port, and carries the keys at the girdle of its battlements; Avignon, buffeted and beaten by the *mistral*, which has kept for itself, for all the glories of the past, naught but insouciance" . . . and so following. Mistral's enthusiasm could almost bring to life again those past glories of his adored *isle sonnante*.

We lingered long on the crest of the Rochers and then slowly, with many stops for fresh points of view, rambled down towards the Cathedral. The only persons in enjoyment of the Park beside ourselves were clerical and military. Several curés or abbés we met, and, at our first view-point the fortifications were held by a group of red-trousered soldiers. It took a little courage to walk up into the teeth of the enemy, for they had a certain belligerent and saucy air, but I was bound not to lose the view. It struck me, — I am getting a little familiar now with the French temperament — that the best attack would be to ask a favour of them in a gentle and dependent manner. So I spoke to the foremost (rather to M'sieur's amazement) and asked what were the grand chateau beyond the river and the ruined round tower. Instantly the man replied with real courtesy and added other information; other questions followed, and in a few seconds at least five vivacious red-legs were vying with one another in giving us information. Of course after the melée began we understood *nothing*, but that was unimportant and it was a curiously pleasant little turn to the situation. I see every day more clearly that a Frenchman ignored is a Frenchman offended. A Frenchman appealed to is at once devoted to you.

We now found ourselves at the level of the Cathe-

dral entrance and paused before entering to study the interesting old Roman portal, its really greatest distinction. The fine Latin inscription of this portal, now vanished from its place but preserved elsewhere, recorded that the people had named this church Notre-Dame-des Doms, because of the celestial gifts which it had received. St. Martha had founded it — coming up, we suppose, for the purpose from Tarascon; St. Ruf had consecrated it; the Emperor Constantine had royally endowed it; nearly annihilated by the Saracens, saved by Charles Martel, it had been restored by the munificence of Charlemagne, and Jesus Christ had come to consecrate it with His own hand, as witnessed by a deathless tradition and declared in the constitutions of the Sovereign Pontiffs, John XXII and Sixtus IV.

I am quite annoyed myself to learn that not one detail of this charming inscription has resisted criticism. I love its sounding, *Viator plurima paucis audi*, and I propose to cling to it in a way as furnishing a particularly ready-to-hand epitome of Avignonese history. It brings easily to mind what is difficult for me to grasp, that in the middle of the eighth century the Rhone Valley, and in particular Avignon, was in the hands of the Moslems; that Charles Martel, the ever-glorious *Dux Francorum*, re-captured it, and sent the Saracens

flying back to Languedoc, to their stronghold, Narbonne.

The interior of the Cathedral is rich, massive, impressive in the true twelfth-century, Romanesque manner, which to me always conveys a dignity and power without spiritual uplift. I was much delighted with a nobly simple episcopal chair or throne of white marble, with fascinating, albeit rather Pagan, sculpture of the symbolic lion and bull of the evangelists, St. Mark and St. Luke, being informed by the sacristan that this was the veritable throne of all the Avignonese popes.

Important, if true, but alas, lacking confirmation! But the great and authentic possession of the Cathedral seemed to us to be the sculptured flamboyant tomb of John XXII. It was curious to find this mighty trophy of the art of the fourteenth century, tucked away in a dull antechamber with indifferent pictures and other ecclesiastical derelicts, "because it annoyed the canons!" The figure of the Pope, under its magnificent Gothic canopy, is modern, a restoration of the nineteenth century, but it served to call up to our minds a suggestion of Jacque Duése, son of the cobbler of Cahors, the hard, grasping, tough-fibred miser and pedant, who for nearly twenty years (1316-1334) filled the world with war and the Church with schism from his palace of Avignon.

Few ecclesiastical and but one other pontifical tomb, are here in the cathedral church of the popes, to speak of that mighty period of their Avignon rule. Archbishops, bishops and cardinals by many scores lie buried under these sombre stones in unnamed sepulchres. The tomb of Benedict XII, successor for eight years of old John, is little better than a collection of broken bits of ancient sculpture and discordant fragments of modern restoration, although Benedict himself was the great builder of the Avignon Papal Palace, building it " on such a gigantic scale as were it destined to be the eternal abode of the Papacy."

We came out from the Cathedral's close, incense-laden atmosphere, into the sweet May noon, and, tired enough, were glad to find seats without walking further, on the stone steps leading up to the Calvary. The whole place was deserted now, that curious disappearance of an entire population which takes place in French towns, at noon, having removed the last lingering soldier and monk from the great Place below us. A little old white-capped goody sat on the opposite side of the Calvary in the sun, her dog lying at her feet. The silence was profound, while above us the dead Christ hung, the Maries mourned and the angels worshipped.

I cannot describe how deeply appealing this

place was to me under these conditions. There stood the Palace which for seventy years had held the crown and top of sovereignty of Christendom in its dissolute corruption, its splendour, its luxury, its world-wide power, its sway over all kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. The whole enormous and impregnable structure was a hollow, deserted, useless monument to a most ignoble chapter of human history, and a decayed ecclesiastical hierarchy. And here, on His cross, still crucified, just beside the old Palace, and gazing out over the city, the river, the valley, the mountains, to the sea and the whole wide world, hung the Man of Galilee, still poor, humble, suffering, uncomprehended, set at naught of the builders, yet transcending and surviving all the strange distortions and enormities of those who have claimed to build in His name.

. . . . . .

Our afternoon was given to long siestas; a very charming tea in a *patisserie*, near the juncture of the Rue de la Republique and the Place de l'Hotel de Ville, and to a walk across the Rhone by the suspension bridge to Villeneuve.

In general I wish to record that Villeneuve-les-Avignon is best seen from Avignon and Avignon from Villeneuve. Looking across the Rhone into Languedoc, for Villeneuve is not in Provence, the

firm, ochre-tinted tower of Philip le Bel, the masses of ancient convents and fortifications of the lesser city, make up an imposing picture. When once within the deserted, arid streets, however, the sense of grandeur eludes you, and the chief consolation is found in looking back over the Ile Barthelasse, the Bridge of St. Benezet and the Rhone again, and gazing at Avignon with its mighty cliffs, its frowning palaces, its motley roofs and belfry towers,

"*tout semés* with garlands."

However, you, whoever you be, who have persistence sufficient to follow these wanderings in old France, fail not to cross the Rhone to Villeneuve, despite heat and dust and dismalness, since otherwise you shall not see the old convent known as the Hospice, and the ruins of Innocent VI's *Chartreuse du Val de Benediction.* This mournful, but still engaging wreck was once a famous and extensive monastery, built by Innocent VI, fifth Avignonese pope, in gratitude for the escape of the papal court from the plague in the year 1360. Like many of the noblest historical monuments of France, the Chartreuse was devastated at the time of the Revolution. Unlike certain of these, the Avignon Palace for example, the Chartreuse has not been touched by the pow-

erful, healing hand of M. Viollet-le-duc. It stands to-day, a poverty-stricken, decaying peasant village entered by a nobly beautiful portal, its forlorn lanes wandering at will between the ruins of once lovely fountains, vaulted cloisters, mortuary chapels, episcopal halls.

From the Chartreuse, being now convinced that Innocent VI had once figured actively in Avignon life, we hastened by the picturesque, arcaded Rue de l'Oratoire to the Hospice, in search of his tomb. We entered a silent courtyard, shadowed by cypresses, — where our summons was answered by a timid, pallid-faced woman in semi-conventual garb. She asked us to wait a moment, and in that moment we caught a glimpse, through a distant cloister, of the hasty flight from somewhere to somewhere else, of a stout old bare-headed woman in the ordinary working garments of the poor. We waited patiently, and in due time there advanced through the cloister, with stately step and slow, the ex-Mother-Superior of the suppressed convent, in full black drapery, starched white cap, cross and rosary, a bunch of keys in one hand.

"She has been restored," murmured M'sieur; "skilfully and quickly."

"Utterly pathetic," I returned under breath, as I advanced with my most deferential manner to

ask of Madame the favour of visiting the museum and chapel.

Had neither the Reverend Mother nor her convent known suppression, she could not have conducted us with greater dignity through the small depleted chambers of her decaying establishment. Everywhere I go in France I feel keenly the pathos of these de-classed nuns, who have neither fixed status, objective nor residence, except as they annex to their houses some educational, industrial or *pensionnat* feature.

With much that was curious there was nothing beautiful in the little museum to our modern eyes, except the lovely St. Rosaleyne of Mignard. Of the story of this Carthusian saint we were then quite ignorant. Later we were to be made pleasantly acquainted with it in unexpected fashion. Plainly, however, Rosaleyne was a Provençal counterpart of Elizabeth of Hungary, as with an air of winning innocence and appeal, she was holding out the skirt of her tunic filled with roses.

Taking it for granted that we would know the saint's legend of the fourteenth century, but surmising that the gossip of the seventeenth might be less familiar, the Reverend Mother alluded to the fact that this Rosaleyne of Mignard's was in reality the portrait of the famous Marquise de

ST. ROSALEYNE, MIGNARD.

Ganges, "*la belle Provençale.*" A question or two, put with unfeigned interest, drew out the tale of moving tragedy, one of the great *causes célèbres* of the seventeenth century.

"She was but one and thirty when she died, M'sieur-Madame" (we were habitually thus hyphenated on our travels in France) "*cette pauvre Marquise.* She was an Avignonese of noble birth and of wealth enormous, with a mother who loved her, with infinite *tendresse.* She was beautiful, that was her great misfortune; in fact all her sorrows, and they were beyond telling, sprang from what the world calls her blessings. For every gift was hers, a beautiful soul in a beautiful body, wealth, noble birth, the gift to inspire ardent admiration in all who met her.

"Born here in Avignon, in 1636, she was married when but a little girl, as one might say, to a courtier of Louis XIV and taken away by him to Versailles. At court she became *la mode,* on account of her extreme beauty, her artlessness, her great name and wealth. The King singled her out of that brilliant throng of beautiful women, the most brilliant court circle of Europe, — M'sieur remembers, *n'est ce pas?* — for his respectful homage. She became, as I have said, the fashion, and *tout le monde* raved over *la belle Provençale,* as she was called."

"What was her name before her marriage, if you please, Madame?" I interrupted.

"*Parfaitement*, Madame. Ask any question. I am forgetful through growing old and the much trouble. Before marriage she was the Demoiselle Anne Elizabeth de Rossan, and she became by her first marriage la Marquise de Castellane. But the husband died in a few years' time, and, out of a crowd of suitors, she married, poor young lady, at twenty-two, the wrong one. This was Lanéde, Marquis de Ganges and they withdrew from court and came back here to Avignon, where both held great estates, and where Madame de Rossan still lived. It was counted a happy marriage until there came upon the scene two brothers of Monsieur le Marquis, the Abbé and the Chevalier de Ganges."

Madame shook her head sorrowfully and paused at this point. Plainly, even though often told, this romantic tale was very real to her.

"Did I not say, Madame-M'sieur, that her beauty was the poor lady's greatest misfortune? Both these men, brothers of her husband, fell madly in love with the Marquise, and sought to win her from her fidelity as wife. Her virtue was, I may truly say, invincible, but her life, her sweet young life, was offered, a sacrifice to her virtue. And this, observe, is no legend, but a narrative

le plus authentique. Since neither could win her favour, these rivals combined in desperate wickedness to gain her immense wealth."

"Another of the fatal advantages," murmured M'sieur.

"*Parfaitement*, M'sieur, *parfaitement.* And yet poverty, it is also not an unmixed good. There came about, probably by the craft of the Abbé de Ganges, some little unhappiness, misunderstanding, between husband and wife; — *que voulez-vous?* — a mere passing cloud. But because through the Abbé's contrivance it became matter of gossip, M'sieur le Marquis thought best that his wife should retire from Avignon, perhaps also from the influence and protection of Madame, her mother, to his chateau of Ganges. Before leaving Avignon, however, the Marquise made a will, leaving all her vast estates at the disposition of her mother. Then, with most grievous premonition of coming doom, and a heart weighed down with sadness, the unhappy lady withdrew to Ganges, where, as she wrote her mother, terror seized her each time she walked alone through the melancholy gardens of the chateau."

"What of the husband? Did he not dwell there with her? Did he not protect her from those brothers?" I asked eagerly.

"Alas, Madame, there seems some reason to

fear that Monsieur le Marquis and his brothers were birds of one feather, and that, incredible though it be, he had left his gentle and faithful lady to their evil designs. Certain it is that they were inmates of her household at Ganges, and that he was not. First, for them, was to work upon her gentleness, until they prevailed with her to make a new will, leaving her property to their brother, her husband.

"It was the year 1667, if my memory serves me, when the day of doom fell. The Marquise, for some slight indisposition, was confined to her bed and alone. Her chamber door was burst open by the Abbé de Ganges, who held in one hand a pistol, in the other a goblet containing a poisoned draught. Close following him came the Chevalier, a naked sword in hand. The Abbé with bitter harshness cried: 'It is necessary to die, Madame, but you may choose the mode. Here are steel, fire and poison. Choose!'

"Rescue was impossible, Madame, — I see horror in your eyes, — *tout à fait* impossible, and in those evil hearts no relenting. She chose the poison, poor lady, drank the cup to its dregs and lay down to die, the brothers leaving the room and craftily stealing away, having locked the door upon her. But life, you see, was strong in the young, beautiful body, and she was of a ready wit. Deter-

mined to rid her stomach ere too late of the poison, Madame forced herself to swallow a curl of her own hair. The attempt was successful. Relieved of the drug, she leaped from her chamber window to the courtyard below, and escaped into the open country by a stable door."

"Do not say that she was overtaken!" I exclaimed, my eyes upon the soft, gentle contour of St. Rosaleyne's face which some way grew a little blurred as I looked.

Madame shook her head solemnly. "There was no escape for her save to heaven. These wretches overtook her at a farmhouse where she had found refuge, and stabbed her mortally. Yet, her death was not instantaneous. God spared her to give an example of His grace, since, in her days of lingering pain, she showed forth the mind of His sweet Son, our Lord and Saviour," and Madame crossed herself devoutly. "Always she prayed the forgiveness of heaven for her murderers, and her chief anxiety in her last agonies was to shield her husband from every breath of suspicion of having covenanted with them to her death."

"The Marquise was a saint," said M'sieur, *sotto voce*, "whether Rosaleyne was or not. What, Madame, of the Abbé and the Chevalier?"

"Both were degraded from their rank and ban-

ished from the kingdom; their destruction was complete. But I fear my tale is too *triste* for Madame. Shall we proceed to the chapel and view the tomb of Innocent VI? "

Visiting a tomb by way of cheer would perhaps not have occurred to me, but we followed willingly in Madame's wide wake through various conventual corridors and came out in a balcony from which we looked down into the small chapel of the Hospice, the nave of which was held by a magnificent Gothic structure, bearing a close resemblance to the tomb of John XXII in the Avignon Cathedral.

" His Holiness, Innocent VI, belongs in no small measure to us of Villeneuve," Madame, now restored to her wonted impassiveness, volunteered as we stood overlooking the splendid monument. " He was, of course, the great builder of the ramparts of Avignon, but also he built our celebrated Chartreuse, and with it our one-time prosperity. Here he loved to dwell, and to it he bequeathed his cross, chalice and all his Papal ornaments. He wished to be buried there in the Church of the Chartreuse, and so he was. But such utter ruin, M'sieur-Madame, as has overtaken that splendid monastery by the enormity of the Revolution! Think only! This magnificent tomb, until the year 1835, had been used as a rabbit-

TOMB OF JOHN XXII, CATHEDRAL, AVIGNON.

hutch, in the chapel over yonder, at the Chartreuse! To save it from complete destruction it was brought to us, restored as you see, and is now properly protected and cared for."

We voiced our sincerity of satisfaction in the fact, and after descending to the floor of the chapel, to study at closer range the beautiful sculpture of the tomb, we came out by the same cypress shadowed court by which we had entered the Hospice, leaving in the hand of our reverend guide a contribution to her humble ménage. For my part, for several hours I seemed to have left my heart behind me before the portrait of *la belle Provençale.*

CHAPTER IV

SINNER AND SAINT

"It came by a lass and it went by a lass."
— JAMES V OF SCOTLAND.

Clement V	1305–1314
John XXII	1316–1334
Benedict XII	1334–1342
Clement VI	1342–1352
Innocent VI	1352–1362
Urban V	1362–1370
Gregory XI	1370–1378

THESE were the Pontiffs of Avignon, all Frenchmen. No matter for an anti-pope or two coming later!

Now this may look rather prosy, but M'sieur and I quickly discovered, in these travels of ours, that without a lucky penny of prose in our pouch, wherewith to trade, we missed all the fairy gold of poetry in this realm of old France. And so, before we entered the precincts of the Palace of the Popes, — Froissart's "*plus belle et plus forte maison du monde*," — we made ourselves familiar with a modicum of its history, its great

names, both of men and women. Herewith a modicum of that modicum is placed at the disposal of the reader.

A Papal court in France was not a thing wholly new. Half a century earlier or thereabouts, Pope Innocent IV, the Genoese Sinibald of Fiesco, threatened, as he at least wished to have believed, by that great genius and mightiest over-lord of the thirteenth century, Frederick II, had fled by night from Italy and in the end had found refuge in France.

On the second day of December, 1244, Innocent reached Lyons, where he set up his pontifical court and where he remained, a sovereign in regal state, until the year 1251. Then, having held the great Council of Lyons, fulminated his thunderbolts of excommunication at the Emperor, and prayed no doubt unceasingly for his taking off, his efforts were rewarded. Frederick died, pursued by the hatred of the Pope, " to the grave and far beyond the grave."

His death gave the signal for the return of the Pope and his court to Italy. They are dead that sought the young child's life, was his watchword; let earth and heaven break out into joy at this great deliverance! Bidding the city of Lyons farewell, and bestowing upon it much praise and many privileges, Innocent descended the Rhone

to Vienne and Orange, thence to Marseilles, where he took ship for Genoa, and so, in triumphal progress, he went towards Rome.

Thus was given the first note of a Papal residence in France, official and established.

Fifty years after the return of Innocent the furious quarrel between Philip le Bel, King of France, and Pope Boniface VIII, reached its awful climax in the quasi-murder of the Pope at Anagni, at the hands of Sciarra Colonna and William of Nogaret, the French King's emissary. It was Philip's purpose henceforth to control the helm of Papal policies. No doubt the precedent of the Lyonese Papal court dwelt with strong suggestion in his mind, and with it the possibility of reducing the arrogant ecclesiastical potentates of Rome, with their annoying powers of interference and anathema, to chaplains of the majesty of France, a splendid but harmless accessory to its greatness.

Moreover Philip had an uneasy conscience regarding Boniface, only to be soothed by proving that great and fallen Pontiff, in the eyes of all Christendom, an accursed reprobate. To accomplish this it was above all required that he hold the Papacy in the hollow of his hand. Under Philip's skilful manipulation of the Conclave in Perugia accordingly, on June fifth, 1305, a Gascon,

Bertrand de Goth, formerly Bishop of Comminges, then Archbishop of Bordeaux, was proclaimed Pope.

Expectant of the arrival of their new head in due time at Rome for his coronation, the Italian cardinals were full soon astounded by the imperative summons to assemble at Lyons for that function. Upon this Cardinal Orsini declared, with some touch of prophetic vision:

"It will be long before we behold the face of another Pope!"

Crowned under the name of Clement V, Bertrand de Goth, the willing servant of Philip le Bel, made his temporary abode variously at Lyons, Poitiers and Bordeaux, until the spring of 1309, when he journeyed by Narbonne, Montpellier and Nimes to Avignon. Soon after the Curia were removed from Rome to Avignon, which remained the residence of Clement for life, and of the succeeding pontiffs until the year 1378. I find in several recent sketches of Avignon and its popes the statement that Clement V withdrew from Rome to the Provençal city in order to escape the turbulent factions of the Italian capital. The fact remains that the Gascon Pope never set foot in Rome, but ruled as a Frenchman on French soil. Urban V, sixth of the Avignon Popes, in 1637 went to Rome, where he remained three

years, returning to Avignon to die. With this exception no Pope was seen in Rome for seventy years.

Clement V died in 1314, "mourned by none except his relatives and favourites; accused by contemporaries and posterity as a pope who had obtained the sacred chair by simony, who yielded himself as servant to the King of France, who removed the Papacy from Rome, its consecrated seat, placed it under bondage in France, and filled the Cardinals' college with Frenchmen, thus sowing the seeds of the later schism." Thus says Gregorovius. Milman draws the portrait of the Gascon Pope in even darker colours:

"Clement," he writes, "left behind him evil fame. He died shamefully rich. To his nephew (nepotism had begun to prevail in its baleful influence) he bequeathed not less than three hundred thousand golden florins, under the pretext of succour to the Holy Land. He had died still more wealthy, but his wealth was drained by more disgraceful prodigality. It was generally believed that the beautiful Brunisand de Foix, Countess of Talleyrand-Perigord, was the Pope's mistress; to her he was boundlessly lavish, and her influence was irresistible even in ecclesiastical matters."

John XXII and Benedict XII initiated and car-

PAPAL PALACE, AVIGNON.

ried out in large degree the establishment of a permanent palace for the Papacy on the cliff of Avignon, but Avignon itself remained a fief of Provence until the year 1348, when Clement VI obtained ownership of the city by purchase. And thereby hangs the tale of the lass by whom came Avignon to the Papacy, the story of a woman who was a sinner; of the lass by whom the Papacy departed from Avignon, the story of a woman who was a saint, we shall hear later.

Jeanne, Countess of Provence, Catherine Benincasa, Saint of Siena! — did ever two more sharply contrasted contemporaries confront one another? The one sold Avignon to a pope; the other rescued a pope from Avignon and brought him, and with him the Papacy, back to Rome.

Pierre Roger de Beaufort, as fourth Avignonese Pope, Clement VI, was he with whom Jeanne had dealings. A princely cardinal aforetime, a man of the world, lover of Cécile de Comminges before as after he assumed the tiara; lover also of art and learning, luxury and magnificence. Under him the most splendid part of the papal palace, the great southern structure containing the Audience Chamber and the new Pontifical Chapel, was built. Under him also were perfected those lavish decorations, by Italian artists' hands, which transformed the interior of his dwelling

from the austere monastery into the "voluptuous academy," fitting stage for the banquets and balls, for the tournaments and Courts of Love, which characterized his reign. It is Clement's coat-of-arms, sculptured over the portal, under which we pass when we enter the Palace of the Popes.

Such was the great spiritual lord and potentate who was set to pass judgment on the guilt or innocence of the most bewitching "perverse and bewildering woman" of her century.

In Jeanne of Provence we are met by a prototype of that beautiful feminine enigma, Mary, Queen of Scots, and in her case, as in Mary's, the world will always divide itself temperamentally into those who sternly denounce and those who, despite misgivings, find charm irresistible.

Prodigal of her dazzling beauty, her great possessions, brimful of talent, sensuous, dashing; able to leap upon the back of a horse in full gallop and control it, this red-haired "incomparable fair mischief," remains to-day the adored liege lady of Provence, despite suspected husband murder and known betrayal of the fairest jewel of her crown, Avignon.

Born in 1327, daughter of Charles, Duke of Calabria, and Marie of Valois, Jeanne became Queen of Naples on the death of her grandfather,

Robert the Wise. In extreme youth she was married to her cousin Andrew, brother of Louis, King of Hungary. At her coronation, — she was then sixteen, — Jeanne arranged that no crown should be placed upon the head of her consort. Andrew grew sulky and gave her no peace; plotted and intrigued ceaselessly to bring her to repair this omission. From careless indifference of him Jeanne was driven thus to hearty detestation, and let it be known that she wished she were rid of him. What follows could almost be transcribed from the biography of Mary Stuart. There was a lonely castle in Aversa, a rushing by night into the bedroom of the royal pair, the dragging away the husband and murder almost in the young wife's sight, while she lay impassive on her bed; and, finally, there was her speedy marriage to Louis of Taranto, one of the conspirators.

Was Jeanne guilty of this murder? Who can answer? Petrarch and Boccaccio alike acquit her, Boccaccio who styled her " the singular pride of Italy." But the King of Hungary, a practical monarch and a brother of the dead youth, believed other and set out forthwith for Naples, bent on avenging. Jeanne wisely withdrew and took ship for Provence, landing with her second husband, a girl of only nineteen even now, at Nice. Here she was hailed with joy by her adoring

Provençals, to whom she prettily said, "I am come to ask you for your hearts, nothing but your hearts."

From Nice Jeanne travelled up through the hills to Grasse, where, as elsewhere, all the world was at her feet, and where she made everybody happy by her generous gifts and yet more generous promises. All the great barons, Roustan de Courmis from St. Paul-du-Var, those of Les Baux, the Villeneuves, d'Agoults and many more, came to do their devoir, meeting her on her way presently from Grasse to Avignon. To them all she swore roundly that she would never alienate or wrong her royal and loyal estates of Provence. But she was even then on her way to stand trial, at the instance of her brother-in-law, Louis of Hungary, before Pope Clement VI, for complicity in the murder of her husband. And her royal and loyal estate of Avignon was to purchase her acquittal!

On the fifteenth of March, 1348, accompanied by her husband, Louis of Taranto, handsome and useless (there were yet two husbands to follow), Jeanne made a triumphal entry, apparently by way of Villeneuve and the Pont St. Esprit, into Avignon. That Clement was not sternly set against his charming young prisoner must have been indicated to her by the royal escort of Papal

guards and cardinals sent to convey her, under a canopy of cloth-of-gold, to his presence. The trial was held in the great frescoed *Salle du Conclave*, the Pope surrounded by his cardinals, Jeanne by her maids-of-honour, the Grand Judiciary and representatives of Hungary between.

Jeanne pleaded her own cause with brilliant rhetoric, good Latin, and above all with the irresistible appeal to the amorous pope of her dazzling youthful beauty, heightened by the pathos of her distress and danger. Clement was bound, by the very nature of things, to render an acquittal, but he was not less crafty than susceptible. Touched by Jeanne's distress, he was yet quick to take full advantage of it. He would grant her absolution, but not unconditionally. In her present desperate lack of resources, destitute of men and money wherewith to win her way back to her kingdom, absolution was but an empty thing. Clement offered her eighty thousand gold florins, coined in Florence, an' she would sell him her fair fortified city of Avignon, a most infamous bargain, a bribe, if you will. Jeanne caught at it eagerly. That the money was paid in cash is proved by the archives of Naples and of the Vatican. The rights of the Holy See to Avignon were legally continued down to the year 1791, when the National Assembly destroyed all

evidence of the Papal purchase. Jeanne's people of Provence could not forgive her this betrayal in her lifetime; but they of Naples received her back as queen, with her clean bill of moral health signed by the holy father. Thus, by a girl of nineteen came Avignon to the Papacy. Twenty-eight years later, led by the hand of a girl, the Papacy left Avignon for Rome, in the person of Gregory XI.

Catherine Benincasa, daughter of a dyer of Siena, a born mystic, a Dominican tertiary, having received the divine command to go out into the world to save souls, became famous, before she had reached her twenty-fifth year, throughout Italy as saint and peacemaker. The corruption of the Church; the desolate and forlorn condition of the Holy See of Rome, deprived of a bishop; the rumours of luxurious vice in the Papal court at Avignon, made up a burden of sorrow which rested without relief upon the mind of Catherine.

In the year 1375 she visited Pisa in an effort to prevent Pisa and Lucca from joining the League of Tuscan Cities against Pope Gregory XI, last of the Popes of Avignon. After prolonged correspondence with the Pope in the effort to reconcile him with the Florentines, Catherine set out, the first week in June, 1376, to journey to Avignon, and seek in person to compose the differences.

In the words of Pope Pius II, used long after, in his Bull for the canonization of Catherine, this humble daughter of a petty artisan, " to reconcile the Florentines and the Church, did not hesitate to cross the Apennines and the Alps in order to reach Gregory, our predecessor."

It was on the eighteenth of June, 1376, that Avignon was reached, and two days later Catherine passed from the house of an absent cardinal, courteously placed at her disposal by Gregory, to his presence. Picturesque, pathetic, a world's width removed from the figure and approach of Jeanne must have been that of Catherine. One can see her in her white serge gown and well worn Dominican mantle, as she passed through the richly frescoed galleries, the gleaming colonnades, the matchless gardens, the state apartments, said to have been unparalleled in the world for magnificence, to the Hall of the Consistory where, assembled in all their state, the Pope and his cardinals waited to receive her. Antoninus, the Florentine chronicler, says, however, that Catherine evinced no timidity or embarrassment in the presence of the princes and potentates of earth, for she realized always the presence of One greater than they, the King of Kings, whom she served.

From her first word it was evident that Greg-

ory yielded to the ascendancy of her lofty spirit. He treated with her concerning the Florentine difficulty as with an equal and showed willingness to enter into overtures for peace.

"I wish the negotiation to rest entirely in your hands, and I entrust to you the honour of the Church."

These were the words of Gregory. Strange words from the world's sovereign pontiff to the frail, unlearned peasant girl of Siena!

It had been plainly said by Bridget of Sweden that the Court of Avignon was the ruin of the celestial court; that all who came within its influence fell into perdition and that houses of ill-fame were more honoured than Holy Church. Gregory, if no saint, was at least no flagrant sinner, like certain of his predecessors of Avignon, but the pace set by Clement VI had never been slackened. In the words of Nostradamus: "The most brilliant and beautiful of the women of Provence, attracted by the Court of Avignon, had established an influence unfortunately too often dangerous or criminal." Inclined at first to look with scornful indifference at Catherine's ascetic face and ill-clad figure, these *grandes dames* of the palace, quick to perceive that she had the ear of the holy father, suddenly began to praise and patronize her, and to make the hours of her

devotion fashionable seasons for their own aristocratic orisons. Fra Raimondo, her confessor, who travelled with her, was not a little impressed as he saw their sweeping, silken draperies touching the coarse garments of his humble mistress, as she knelt in prayer. "He was moved by such unexpected signs of grace; he even experienced admiration of the beautiful costumes and graceful courtesies of the *grandes dames;* he also thought it well to expostulate with Catherine on her want of gratitude."

"In truth, it is not good in you, dear mother," thus Fra Raimondo, "to be indifferent to such courtesy; all the great ladies make profound reverence to you when they meet you, and you turn away your head; they approach you with amiable words about religion; you reply roughly: *we must first get out of the pit of hell and out of the grasp of the devil and then we will speak of God,* and straightway you fly from their presence. I find it difficult to forgive you, above all for the manner in which you received that beautiful lady the other day, who wished to entertain you at her house. You scarcely even looked at her. Is it well to treat your fellow creatures thus?"

Catherine's answer was unsparing: "Father, if you could know, as I do, the vileness which proceeds out of the beautiful mouths of these proud

mistresses of the cardinals, you would vomit forth the remembrance of it."

On one occasion, having been asked to address the Court, assembled in all its luxurious splendour, Catherine denounced the contagion of vice which could not escape her pure vision. Challenged by Gregory himself, as to the justice of her censures, since she could have neither knowledge nor proof of these vices, she rose from her humble posture before the Pope, assumed an air of authority, and raising her thin, white hand to heaven, said: "I declare in the name of Almighty God that I perceived more distinctly the horrors of the sins which are committed in this Court, while I was yet in my little room at Siena, than even those do who are in the midst of these vices."

The Pope was silent, and many said, "It is not a woman that speaks, but the Holy Ghost Himself."

The negotiation with the Florentines being long delayed, and inconclusive, ample time was afforded Catherine, during the long summer spent in Avignon, to bring forward the deeper, underlying purpose of her coming, which was the return of the Pope to Rome. Such an undertaking must have appeared a less revolutionary measure to Gregory than if proposed a decade earlier, before the journey of Urban V to Rome, his three-year

sojourn there and his return to Avignon. To be sure, there would be the bitter opposition of the cardinals to overcome, — French gentlemen for whom an "earthly Paradise" existed in the glowing sun of Provence; the charms of the Avignon court, its banquets and its balls; the wines of the Roussillon and Burgundy, — by no means the least consideration.

But Gregory was weary of the excesses of his court and a break was not unwelcome. Also, to return to Avignon from Rome would be always possible. Destitute of initiative, the Pope was by no means insusceptible to influence, and this influence was now quietly but effectively brought to bear upon him by the Saint of Siena, become a member almost of his household.

It is related that, on a certain day, in one of his state apartments, Gregory was engaged in showing Catherine his rare manuscripts, illuminated missals and the like. From the windows glorious views over the Rhone Valley and the distant mountains lay before them. Apparently lost in admiration, Catherine bent long over one priceless volume, the Pope standing silent by her side.

"It is here that I find repose for my soul," he commented at length, believing that he had now touched a pursuit with which even this little as-

cetic could sympathize; "in study and in the contemplation of nature."

Looking up with the light of inspiration on her face, Catherine made answer:

"In the name of God and for the fulfilment of duty, you will close the gates of this beautiful palace, you will turn your back on this beautiful country and set out for Rome, where you will be amidst ruins, tumults, malaria and fever."

This dictum struck into the weak soul of Gregory as the voice of God, and after endless vacillations, advances and retreats, through which Catherine guided him with a kind of divine diplomacy, he brought himself to the sharp wrench of departure. Indeed the irresolute pope, under Catherine's inspired training, rose to a pitch of heroism which, if not sustained, was noble while it lasted. His aged father, finding that he was about to leave for Rome, threw himself at his feet and clinging to his knees, cried with agony:

"How couldst thou deceive, not only thy country but thy own father? Thou art going to encounter unheard of dangers! Thou shalt not leave this palace, except over the body of thy father, slain with grief."

Even this appeal was withstood by Gregory, and on the thirteenth of September all was in readiness for his journey, three galleys having been

ordered by Catherine, to lie at the disposal of the holy father, in the port of Marseilles.

From Mrs. Butler's charming biography of Catherine I condense the following description:

"The gates of the papal palace at Avignon were opened long before sunrise, and an unwonted excitement was seen to prevail. The people of Avignon stood in crowds, mute and displeased. The Pope's favourite horse, on which he rode forth, reared at the gate of the palace and backed, to the risk of the rider's life. Three times it repeated the capricious performance, and finally the pontifical grooms forced it back to its stall and brought out another horse for his Holiness. This was regarded as an extremely evil omen, but Gregory maintained his presence of mind and resolution."

The Provençal singer, Peter Amély, chaplain of the Pope, has left his description, being that of a participant, of this ecclesiastical exodus. While high flown, it is full of picturesque and vivid touches.

"On Tuesday, the thirteenth of September, 1376," he wrote, "Gregory XI left the palace with the cardinals, mounted on white horses, sumptuously caparisoned. Chariots followed, loaded with treasure; then came the chaplains and domestic servants of the Pope and the car-

riages of the cardinals and of the suite. Armed knights, with equerries, soldiers and valets, headed and followed up the rear of the *cortége* which traversed the sorrowing city."

It is interesting to us who travel in Provence to-day to trace the route followed in this journey: Tuesday night was spent at Orgon (on the branch railway line to-day from Cavaillon to Miramas); on Wednesday, just before sunset, Aix was reached and the hospitality of the bishop enjoyed, apparently over two nights; on Friday, "after crossing a chain of rugged hills, we halted a few hours at Trets, where a sumptuous repast was prepared for us." That night was spent in Saint Maximin (where we all go to-day, if we can, to visit the finest Gothic church in Provence, with its tomb and relics of the Magdalene), and on Saturday, during the day, a halt was made at Auriol. In our days pilgrimage is often made from this point to La Sainte-Baume, the legendary cavern-retreat of Mary Magdalene, which popes and potentates, queens and kings by the score have visited through all the centuries.

"Towards evening," Amély proceeds, "as we pursued our way, an immense and rejoicing crowd which met us, carrying torches and banners, and accompanied by music, announced that we were approaching Marseilles. . . . The next morning

the north wind blowing freshly, the gentle Pontiff came forth from the Matin service in the abbey of St. Victor, and entered the magnificent galley which was waiting for him. . . . We set sail amid the lamentations of the Marseillais; all were sobbing; the Pontiff himself wept."

Three months were consumed in this voyage, stops of varying lengths being made at Toulon, Antibes, Villefranche, Genoa, Pisa, Leghorn and other French and Italian ports. The "Lily of Pontiffs," as Amély styles Gregory, and the Curia landed at Corneto December fifth but Rome was not reached until January seventeenth, 1377. At eventide of that great day of rejoicing, the Bishop of Rome, who looked at Rome for the first time, reached St. Peter's and cast himself before the Apostle's grave to pray. "The great work was accomplished; the seventy years' exile was ended;" the chosen of the Lord had returned from Captivity in Babylon; the glory had departed from Avignon.

Where, meanwhile, was Catherine? Not visibly present that day in Rome, but hers was the prevailing power which brought about that consummation.

Having seen the holy father safely off on that September morning, in Avignon, with good heart and hope she hastened overland, as she had come,

to Genoa, where she foresaw the papal galleys would of necessity stop for supplies. Well also did Catherine foresee that her sovereign lord and disciple would require, by the time Genoa was reached (a full month), fresh supplies of courage and determination. It was true that the terrors of the sea and the subtle persuasions of his most reluctant cardinals had by this time worked upon Gregory's irresolute soul, so that he was even then about to confirm their consistorial vote to return forthwith to Avignon.

It is a touching little story, that of the weary, storm-tossed "gentle Pontiff," escaping by night in Genoa from his cardinals, and coming without escort, wrapped in a cloak, to Catherine's lowly door, to seek her counsel and her prayers, at this crisis of the Christian Church. The companions of Catherine narrate the long and solemn interview between these two, and tell us that the Pope left with his face now fully set towards Rome, while Catherine spent the remaining hours of the night on her knees in prayer for him.

The last time I visited the Roman Forum I sought out the church of Santa Francesca Romana, formerly known as Santa Maria Nuova. Here lies buried Gregory XI, the last French Pope, who died in Rome March, 1378, little more than a year after his entry into the city. The

RETURN OF GREGORY XI.
Relief from Tomb in Church of S. Francesca Romana, Rome.

Latin inscription of the monument, erected two centuries after his death, has been translated thus:

" To Gregory XI of Limoges, admirable for his humanity, learning and uprightness. Eager to rescue Italy sick to death by reason of her confusion, and moved by the Holy Ghost and the rejoicing of mankind, he gloriously restored the Papal See to Rome, after an absence of seventy years, in the seventh year of his Pontificate."

The inscription is signed in behalf of the Senate and People of Rome, by Consuls and Prior, in the year 1584.

The tomb is adorned with a marble bas-relief, depicting, in a naive and highly symbolic manner, the solemn moment of the return of the Papacy from Avignon in the person of Gregory. At the right side of the relief, through a mountain pass, emerges a spirited troop of knights in armour, mounted on war horses, preceded by boys blowing trumpets. A pillar bears the name of the great founders of the Church, Peter and Paul, and of the sculptor, Oliveri, and around its base winds a cavalcade of the French cardinals, riding richly caparisoned palfreys. In the centre of the scene, at the head of the cardinals, under a baldacchino, carried by Romans, rides Gregory. From

the city gate, at the left, the populace crowd forth to meet him, the genius of Rome herself at the head, in the person of Minerva. Above the battlements and towers of Rome, on a cloud of angel heads, rests the Chair of St. Peter, as if just in act of being transported miraculously from Avignon to Rome, while a charming cherub hovers over it. In one hand he holds the tiara, the keys in the other. But the *opus oliverii* fails not in its conception of spiritual values, for, at the right hand of Gregory, and seeming to beckon him on towards Rome, is the Sienese maiden, Catherine, in her Dominican hood and mantle, the very soul of the machine.

Jeanne of Provence and Catherine of Siena died within two years of each other, never having met; Catherine in Rome in 1380, at the age of thirty-three, still a holy saint, Jeanne in 1382 at the age of fifty-five, still beautiful and a sinner, strangled to death in a lonely prison. Many letters passed between these two, those of Catherine dictated on her knees before God, with strong crying and with tears for the cleansing of the wayward soul of the queen, whom she thus addressed:

" Dearest Mother in Christ sweet Jesus: I, Catherine, servant and slave of the servants of

Jesus Christ, write to you in His precious Blood, with desire to see you compassionate to your own soul and body."

These letters, carefully sealed and bearing marks of having been much read, were found after the death of Jeanne. Whether they bore any fruit in her heart, who can say?

"Jeanne thoroughly enjoyed existence," says an anonymous writer; "for her the troubadours, Vidal and Sordello and Castelnau, sang; for her Giotto painted; for her Petrarch spoke and for her, 'constrained,' as he says, 'by the authority of a superior,' Boccaccio wrote the most indecorous of his pages. When this jocund queen went to Rome (in 1368, during the sojourn there of Urban V) Petrarch did the honours of the Holy City to a scholar well able to understand all its charm, and after the procession of the Fourth Sunday in Lent, the Pope gave her the Golden Rose, 'that type of cheerfulness, joy and contentment,' coveted by kings and granted but to very few."

Catherine of Siena has been described briefly but well as the "friend and guide of souls; the mystic, the friend of God, before whom the ages bend in reverence;" and again thus: "Her figure flits like that of an angel through the darkness of

the time, over which her gracious genius sheds a soft radiance. . . . She wrote to cardinals, princes and tyrants, to generals of mercenaries, heads of republics, kings and popes, with a charming candour, . . . and on almost every page of her letters stands the great word, 'Reformation.'"

If the other-worldliness of Catherine has been embodied in succeeding centuries in the great movement of the Reformation, the joyous this-worldliness of Jeanne, it has been well suggested, has found its outworking in that other great movement, the Renaissance.

Having filled my mind full of these two fourteenth century heroines, so intimately associated with Avignon, I confess their "spirits twain" roamed about the Palace with me, during the week whose experiences I am recording, far more perceptibly than did those of any Clement or Gregory. We had passed by the beautiful portal of Clement VI into the Court of Honour, had been received by a courteous, elderly *gardien*, and, in company with a group of forty, of whom we were the only English-speaking visitors, we were led through the vast and vaulted chambers, empty now and echoing.

But the *gardien* spoke a few words of delicious

English and had a grand air of command, almost military, mingled with his courtesy. In order to give us full benefit of his occasional English, he kept M'sieur and me close at his elbow always, postponing all explanations until he had our eye and our full attention. It was really interesting to see how this whole company of French people, chiefly of the humbler class, gave way to us as strangers, quite as a matter of course, giving us precedence, however much we might protest. M'sieur said it was more of a study to him to watch them watching us, than it was to see the Palace.

But the Palace is the most wonderful place I have seen since the Castle of St. Angelo, with which it naturally connects. The endless Gothic walls, consistories, guardrooms, dormitories, refectories, kitchens, chapels, are all cleared now, to the credit of the French government, of the soldiery once quartered here, and have been cleansed and restored with endless attention to detail. Every restoration is made with closest study of the original architects' plans in the Vatican library.

The place is redeemed from the deplorable condition described by Henry James as existing twenty years ago, and is altogether impressive. The walls are at least eight feet in thickness and

form gigantic window niches; the Papal bed-chamber has three such. Here we found a few remnants of frescoes, but in the robing-room they are still brilliant with elaborate scenes from the chase, hunting with falcons and dogs, fishing, bird-snaring, all archaic and of a delicate, clear green tone. From here a narrow winding-stair leads up to the *Tour des Anges*.

The Pope's small chapels of St. Martial and St. Jean, *sopra* and *sotto*, in the *Tour St. Jean*, are still rich in frescoes, attributed to Simone Memmi and to Matteo di Viterbo, who used in great abundance a particular deep *azzura* which, this year, we call " Coronation blue." I wanted hours alone in those small Gothic chapels, but could have only a few moments. We saw Rienzi's prison, saw the bell-tower whose famous silver bell had announced the election of each Avignonese Pope, and the great arched loggia in which the pontiffs used to stand and bless the people in the court below.

When all had scattered save ourselves, our *gardien* with a dignified and yet appealing gesture, detained us to place in our hands a postal-card likeness of himself, with a verse of his Provençal poetry, signed with his name, G. Vassel, printed below. When we had sufficiently appreciated this souvenir, a second card was produced, upon

ARLÉSIENNES.

which the figure of the poet Mistral was shown, with our *gardien* in velvet jacket and boutonnière, standing at his elbow, both surrounded with pretty Arlésiennes in native costume.

"This is Mistral — our great poet!" he explained; "it was the day of a grand fête. This is I, *moi-même*, I too am Félibre!"

We found this declaration really thrilling because of the sense in the fine old face of the utter glory of the moment when he had thus stood beside Mistral. Plainly it had been the supreme event of his life to him. But as we came away I murmured:

"Exactly what is it to be Félibre? Do you know?"

M'sieur made prudent reply:

"I know in part, but I shall not prophesy even in part until I know more intimately. We can wait for the Félibrige until we come to Arles."

"Arles, where all the pretty women who wear the pretty costume, live," I exclaimed. "I am in a hurry to get there. If all the Midi is as crowded with interest as Provence, how are we ever to do it justice in three months!"

"Do you realize that we have not yet glanced at the Loan Exposition of Provençal Artists, yonder, in the Grande Chapelle? M. Vassel,

Guide and Félibre, watches us wistfully," M'sieur admonished.

At first, tired with the round of the Palace and filled full of the sense of the past, I was disinclined to receive impressions so widely different as those offered by a collection of modern pictures. However, reflecting that there would be rest in the complete change, we rejoiced the heart of M. Vassel by purchasing tickets. We followed him, first of all, into a tiny side chapel where we sat long and rested well in studying a triptych by Paul Vayson, a native of Vaucluse. The painting represents the life of St. Gent, the young shepherd saint and martyr of the eleventh century who sought retirement in the Gorge du Bausset near Vaucluse, preached to the pagan folk thereabouts, ploughed the rough fields with a cow and a wolf harnessed together, and, as the old legend goes, "while his hands guided the plough his heart conversed with God." The third scene shows the boyish saint lying down in the wilderness, for his last slumber in the tomb his own hands had hewn out of the bare rock, above which the weird shape of his famed and faithful wolf stands, howling a dirge to the moon. The canticle of St. Gent has been woven by Gounod into his opera of "Mireille," based upon Mistral's poem, with fine effect. Those who read Mistral's

Memoirs, as we did later, must feel a peculiar interest in the youthful patron saint of those who suffer from fever or from drought, to whose shrine Mistral himself made pilgrimage in that charming childhood upon which he loves to dwell.

"Do you realize that we must make pilgrimage to a shrine of Vaucluse — *the* shrine of Vaucluse — before we leave Avignon?" asked M'sieur, as we entered the Grande Chapelle, the walls well hung with paintings.

"Why not go this afternoon?" I asked, suddenly moved to escape from the mental rigours of Avignon.

"*Parfaitement, Madame, parfaitement,*" was M'sieur's answer; "and to-morrow let it be the Pont du Gard. We will have a triptych of our own; — Avignon in the centre; Petrarch's Vaucluse on one side; the old Roman aqueduct on the other."

"A perfectly good idea, — and then the day after to-morrow, — we shall have been a full week in Avignon, — let us motor to Arles by way of St. Remy and Les Baux, Nimes after, and then hie us on to the Riviera."

This was agreed upon fully later. Meanwhile our impulse to explore Provence we found distinctly stimulated by the hour of keen enjoyment which we spent among the works of Provençal artists.

Hardly could introduction have been better to the landscape, the architecture, the rural and personal types of this *locale*. The flat green stretches of the Crau (crow), broken by tall hedges of close-planted cypress trees; the wild hunting at the fords of the stout bulls of the Camargue; the characteristic white ponies, — descendants, lineal, we are told, of the Saracen war horses left ranging here in the eighth century, after their owners were put to flight by Charles Martel; sheep and shepherds; the chapel of St. Benezet and the Papal Palace; pretty Arlésienne girls gathering olives; processions through dim cloistered vistas; enchanting mediaeval churches and abbeys, rich in sculpture; massive Roman arenas, arches and aqueducts; the Rhone in rage and the Rhone in peace; Mireille and yet again Mireille, such were among the favourite subjects. The artistry was, on the whole, worthy of the subjects, and we coveted for ourselves many charming bits. Three water colours appealed to me most strongly: a "Burial Procession Emerging from the Church of St. Trophimus;" "After the Mass" and an "Old Shepherd." They were signed "Lelée — Arles." We were destined to meet this name again.

CHAPTER V

THE CONSTELLATION OF THE KITE

THE circumference of the Kite, it is to be observed, is not a railroad, but an imaginary line, such as is drawn by geographers of the heavens, touching here and there a star, differing from another star in glory. And this imaginary line surrounds the heart of Old Provence.

It will at once be seen that, starting from Avignon, these stars of the Kite seem to fight in their courses against you when you attempt a plan by which to visit them all. Each person of whom you inquire the best way to combine or to separate them will advise you of a new method, while Baedeker and his fellow guides seem to assure you that all should be visited from each, or, perhaps, even better, each from all! In fine, it is to despair, as the French say.

Finally we concluded to take the circumference of the Kite and abandon the Rhone, and with it Tarascon and Beaucaire, — St. Martha and her dragon, and the good King René to the contrary notwithstanding. On the whole, I think, time not being eternity, we did very well. St. Martha's legendary traces are to be found all over Old Provence; King René was conspicuous also at Les Baux, and as for the Tarasque, did we not see a replica of sufficient terror in Musée Arlaten later?

For example or for warning, I will here record our method of attack on the problem of the Kite. Avignon and Arles were our centres. We visited Vaucluse as an excursion from Avignon by rail, one afternoon; and the Pont du Gard in like manner on another; from Avignon later we journeyed by motor to Arles *via* St. Remy, Les

Baux and Mont Majour. At Arles we remained a week, during which we went to Nimes by rail for a day; while in St. Gilles we spent a morning. With but two weeks to give to the constellation of the Kite I can recommend this plan.

To return to Avignon: after our strenuous morning in the Palace we were glad to get back to the quiet luxury of the Hotel d'Europe for rest, but at five o'clock we were refreshed and full of *wanderlust* again. At that hour, having walked for a while around the ramparts, that *merveilleuse parure* of the city which so exquisitely conforms to the Palace in form and colour, we repaired to the Gare and boarded a train for L'Isle-sur-Sorgue, en route for Vaucluse.

I will not deal in the platitudes which yet cover vivid realities, regarding the magic which must always attach to the name Vaucluse. It seemed, however, that May afternoon, a thing wholly impossible that, in our commonplace, dusty P. L. M. railway carriage, we two Americans were on our way to Petrarch's shrine of the fourteenth century, the scene of his love, his religious and intellectual aspirations, of his noble rages and his exquisite dreams.

"What do you really know about Petrarch?" asked M'sieur as, with content and joy in our minds, we looked out over the sweet, blossoming

landscape of the Comtat through which our train jaunted in leisurely fashion.

"Less than I did twenty years ago," I admitted, "but perhaps enough to justify me in going to Vaucluse. It would be impious, *n'est ce pas?* to take this journey knowing nothing of what Vaucluse represents."

"Do you expect me to answer that question categorically? No man is called upon to incriminate himself. I have certain catch-words, as: Petrarch, Laura, Seclusion, Shrine, Vaucluse. String them together for me, if you can."

In substance what we evolved and filled out later was the briefest possible sum of Petrarch's life:

The poet, born 1304 and dying in 1374, covered with his life almost precisely the period of the Avignonese Papacy. With it his life was deeply interwoven outwardly, although he stood uncompromisingly against the Court and its luxuries, terming the residence of the Popes in Avignon "the Babylonish Captivity," name by which it has ever since been called.

Italy was the land of Petrarch's birth, of his death, of the last third of his life, above all, of his passionate sympathy.

"Thou shalt see Italy, that honoured land,
Which from my eyes, O Song! nor seas, nor streams, heights,

So long have barr'd and bann'd,
But love alone,"

he sings in his magnificent Crusaders' Canzone. In the sixteenth Canzone he cries:

"O my own Italy! Though words are vain
The mortal wounds to close,
Unnumbered, that thy beauteous bosom stain,
Yet may it soothe my pain
To sigh forth Tiber's woes
And Arno's wrongs." . . .

France, however, or rather Provence, was Petrarch's adopted country, his family removing to Avignon while he was a child, and later settling in Carpentras, capital of the Comtat-Venaissin, that curious little province east of the Rhone, to which alone in France the term county is given. Under the immediate shadow of the papal influence, as his youth was passed largely in Avignon, Petrarch naturally entered the church, taking orders during the pontificate of John XXII.

The young Abbé was already conspicuous for literary achievement when, at the age of twenty-three, he met Laura. That meeting made of him a poet. His life can be rather roughly divided into three periods, each covering a little over twenty years, with one interregnum of five years. The first period is his life up to the time he met Laura in the year 1327. The second is the period

of his absorbing passion for her, twenty-one years, spent in the main in Avignon and Vaucluse, closing with her death in 1348. Then follows an interval of seclusion in Vaucluse and of restless wandering between Provence and Italy, an interval in which occurred the episode of Cola di Rienzi's visit to Avignon; in the year 1353 Petrarch left Avignon finally for Italy, where he spent the last twenty-one years of his life, dying in Arquà in 1374.

Bound up with the poet's ardent devotion to Italy and Rome was his perpetual protest against the residence of the Popes in Avignon, the vice and luxury of whose Court he probably exaggerated. This protest was coupled with the appeal, addressed to each pope in turn, to remove the Holy See back to its proper home, a consummation well nigh as near to his heart as it was to the heart of Catherine of Siena.

In one of his letters to the Popes of Avignon Petrarch thus personifies Rome, abandoned by the Papacy:

"I saw waiting at the gate of thy palace, O Pontiff of Avignon, a venerable matron whom I seemed to recognize; and yet I did not dare to pronounce her name. Her countenance was sorrowful; her garments were poor and neglected; yet there was in her an ineffable majesty; most

noble were her features and bearing, and her speech was that of one long accustomed to rule imperially. The greatness of her soul beamed through the thick veil of sadness which enveloped her. I asked at last her name, and she murmured it forth. It reached me through the void, in the midst of sobs: It was *Rome!*"

Petrarch in urging upon Urban V the duty of returning from Avignon to Rome, seriously combats the hesitation of the cardinals, by upholding the excellence of Italian wine. But the Curia preferred the vintages of Roussillon and Burgundy and Urban was actually obliged, in his three years spent in Rome, to import his wines from France.

Petrarch further challenges the Pope as to what answer he could make in the Day of Judgment if Christ asked him why he had fixed his seat on the rock of Avignon instead of in the city chosen of God.

"What wilt thou answer," he cries, "when Peter says to thee: "I fled from Rome before Nero's wrath; my Master reproved my flight and I returned to die; tell me, what Nero or Domitian drove *thee* from Rome? Wouldst thou rather rise at the last day among the infamous sinners of Avignon, than between Peter and Paul?"

So much for the Abbé Petrarch's attitude toward the Avignon Popes. We all think oftenest

of his attitude toward Madonna Laura, and yet, so little is known of her that men will discuss, as they discuss Dante's Beatrice, whether she ever lived, or was but the symbol of exalted womanhood, divine grace, or some other thing spiritual. Certain it is that the unwelcome tradition which confuses her with a certain Avignon matron named Laura de Sade, mother of eleven children, is now rejected, and that we know how little we know of the real Laura, in fact not even her surname. " I rather fancy it that way " myself. She seems to have been a simple country maiden, exceedingly beautiful, virtuous and high minded, who died as she lived, a virgin.

Petrarch first met Laura at six o'clock in the morning of Good Friday, 1327. She had golden hair and brilliant dark eyes, and she wore a gown of green, embroidered with violets. Like Beatrice, she knew how to dress enchantingly. She loved her lover, but his religious profession was an obstacle to their love, and her virtue made his passion hopeless. Hopeless it was, but immortal, being invincible even by Death.

The lovers met often in the neighbourhood of Laura's birthplace, near the Fountain of Vaucluse, and this became Petrarch's chosen refuge when despair drove him from the society of others happier and more heedless than himself. " From

PETRARCH.

LAURA.

my tender youth," he says, " I loved that fountain, and it was afterwards the port in which I took refuge." Therefore are the Fountain and Glen of Vaucluse consecrated for all time to memories of a pure and deathless love, to a pure woman and a deathless poet.

Laura and Vaucluse are united and embalmed in perpetual fragrance in Petrarch's fourteenth Canzone: " *Chiare, fresche e dolci acque.*"

Leigh Hunt has given us a charming English version of the song, some lines of which are given herewith:

" Clear, fresh and dulcet streams,
Which the fair shape who seems
To me sole woman, haunted at noon-tide;
Fair bough, so gently fit,
(I sigh to think of it),
Which lent a pillar to her lovely side;
And turf and flowers bright-eyed,
O'er which her folded gown
Flow'd like an angel's down;
And you, O holy air and hush'd,
Where first my heart at her sweet glances gush'd;
Give ear, give ear, with one consenting
To my last words, my last, and my lamenting.
. . . . . .
" Perhaps, some future hour,
To her accustom'd bower
Might come the untamed and yet the gentle She;
And where she saw me first,
Might turn with eyes athirst
And kinder joy, to look again for me.
. . . . . .

"And heaven itself could not say nay,
If with her gentle veil she wiped the tears away."

"How well I call to mind,
When from these boughs the wind
Shook down upon her bosom flower on flower;
And there she sat, meek-eyed,
In midst of all that pride,
Sprinkled and blushing through an amorous shower.
Some to her hair paid dower,
And seem'd to dress the curls,
Queenlike, with gold and pearls;
Some, snowing on her drapery, stopp'd,
Some on the earth, some on the water, dropp'd;
While others, fluttering from above,
Seem'd wheeling round in pomp, and saying,
'Here reigns Love.'

. . . . . .

"And from that time till this, I bear
Such love for the green bower, I cannot rest elsewhere."

The river Sorgue, which issues from the Fountain of Vaucluse, waters many parts of Provence, and near Avignon falls into the Rhone. Within the recesses of the ravine, on the bank of the Sorgue, not far from the fountain head, and but fourteen English miles from Avignon, Petrarch fixed his abode. His dwelling was a simple cottage, his companions an old fisherman and his wife and a dog. "With respect to my place of abode," he wrote later, "at Vaucluse I lived the life of an angel." Again he thus described his idyllic seclusion:

"I have made two gardens that please me

wonderfully. I do not think they are to be equalled in all the world. I am positively angry that there is anything so beautiful out of Italy. . . . I keep silence from noon till night. . . . I often content myself with the brown bread of the fisherman and even eat it with pleasure. . . . But still I have my luxuries, — figs, raisins, nuts and almonds. I am fond of the fish with which this stream abounds. . . . As to my dress, there is an entire change; you would take me for a labourer or shepherd."

But Petrarch, even in the recesses of Vaucluse could not be hid. Hardly had he taken up his abode as thus described, when there appeared in his seignorial castle on the cliffs above the roaring river, the learned and noble Philip of Cabassole, Bishop of Cavaillon. The friendship which followed between the two scholars in their chosen retreat lasted until death. His friendships, notably those with Cabassole and the great Cardinal Colonna, adorn the character of Petrarch hardly less than his love for Laura. Who can forget the immortal sonnet in which he laments friend and lady together? —

> "Fall'n that proud Column, fall'n that Laurel tree,
> Whose shelter once relieved my wearied mind!"

After his fiftieth year Petrarch belongs to Italy, despite the persistent efforts of different

Popes to fix him as an ornament to the Court of Avignon. But that Vaucluse remained dear to him we can conclude from his writing: "I sigh in renouncing Vaucluse and feel myself still irresistibly impelled towards it. Our youth is passed; illusions are no longer to be indulged. What hinders us from gliding on the few days that remain, in peace and study?"

And now we were in very truth approaching Vaucluse. The heat of the May day was over, and the air was laden with odours from the blossoming orchards when we alighted at a small country station with the formidable name, L'Isle-sur-Sorgue, a village brimming with the pleasant sound of the brimming Sorgue, thick set with water-wheels and shady avenues.

We searched diligently for a carriage in which to continue our journey to the Fountain, but no vehicle was in sight save an enormous three-horse omnibus. Into it we entered, we and one other passenger, a little lady of Provence who looked like a school-teacher. Evidently a horse for each passenger was deemed excessive and after driving out through the village we were bidden to descend and enter a landau with two horses driven up in haste. This was to our great glee, and we were soon bowling along a splendid country

road between mulberry trees and sweet meadows. Trying to be amiable to our little companion *vis-à-vis*, I remarked in broken accents something about the fragrance of the meadows. She plainly was of the conscientious and earnest order and sought to give the traveller the information she seemed to need. "It is grass," she volunteered. "It is for the horses." After that I desisted.

We were all the time getting nearer to a tremendous wall of umber-coloured mountain rock, rising about twelve hundred feet abruptly from the plain, where, level as a floor, ran our road. Suddenly a turn brought two things to the front — a beautiful rushing river, vividly green (we had seen it at L'Isle, but lost it again), and an opening, cleft straight into the awful crags before us, at the base of which, in thick verdure, nestled the little sad-coloured, deeply shaded village of Vaucluse. Very soon the carriage stopped and we had about two hours in which to explore. We set out at once, with our driver for guide, leaving behind us a cluster of cafés, which, with paper and cloth mills, sundry bridges and churches, constitute Vaucluse the village. Taking the path beside the thundering torrent, we pushed on deeper and deeper up into the Gorge.

Our good star must have led us to visit this spot at sunset. The hour and the scene quite

defy description in their solemn beauty. The tremendous face of rock rising perpendicularly before us, tawny in itself and now steeped in the glow of a crimson sunset, was incredibly brilliant against the blue of the sky. The torrent was of vivid green, and rising beyond it, at our right, towered mighty cliff walls. On the crest of these stood the picturesque silhouette of a ruined chateau, once the abode of Philip, Bishop (and Cardinal) of Cavaillon. Petrarch's own cottage was below, on the margin of the stream, an ideal retreat for a heart-broken recluse. What wonder the poet exclaimed:

> "Love not in Cyprus found so sweet a nest
> As this, by pine and arching laurel made.
> The birds, breeze, water, branches, whisper love!"

For it is true; all is here, and with and beyond it,

> "The light that never was on sea or land,
> The consecration and the poet's dream."

On the path led, hedged in with fig and laurel growth, ivied and moss-grown rocks, wild flowers, their heads nodding over the water, swept by the rush of air made by the torrent. At last we came to the path's ending at the foot of the great rock wall, and here was the source of the Sorgue — a

VAUCLUSE.

wide, deep, utterly motionless pool of clear, very dark green water. The air was resonant with the thunder of the water as it leaves the pool, but the pool itself as still and soundless as a grave. The red sunset light bathed the crests of the rock and streamed half way down — the moon hung over the ruined castle above us; where we stood by the pool all was cool, shadowy, solemn. It was a moment full of the power of the beauty at the heart of nature. The profound added interest of the highest human personality, the Poet with his impassioned heart and his inspired imagination, is for ever inwrought into the texture of it all.

We walked lingeringly back, the shadows deepening in the valley, the music of the Sorgue filling all the resounding arches of the great crags which shut us in on either side. Pines and cypresses grew thickly over on the other side of the stream; the small, slender cypresses pricking up through verdure of laurel and fig shrubs, the gloomy pines above dotting the rocks here and there.

At eight o'clock, with much anticipation of the quiet drive back to L'Isle, we entered the carriage at the Hotel Petrarque et Laure (one could only murmur — "Imperial Caesar, dead and turned to clay, etc!"). Presently a crippled youth,

with his personal belongings tied up in a coarse blue cloth, climbed into the carriage and took the seat facing us, while a large express box was put up above at the *cocher's* feet. We drove through the village by a bridge across the Sorgue to the Post Office, and there sat in the moonlit twilight for twenty minutes while the mail was being made up. Presently the driver came back bringing two large mail pouches which he piled on the box in front and at the same moment a young woman, with two large babies and a basket, took her place beside the cripple facing us. A little dismayed and not a little disappointed, as we saw our lovely tête-à-tête drive disappearing, we made everybody welcome, and were glad to start back through the village, no more to delay, as we supposed. Not at all. We stopped again at the "Petrarque et Laure" where a large concourse seemed waiting for us. Our *cocher* mercifully drew the line, after a soldier had mounted to the seat beside him among the pouches and boxes, and a merry youth of Vaucluse, with a cigarette and a nice taste in jokes, had seated himself sidewise at my feet — his feet upon a step of the landau. Then we really started. All went well. Both babies unmurmuringly went to sleep, each on a maternal arm. How it must have ached! The frogs croaked loudly, the river ran, the sweet

fields gave out their fragrance and the two ponies trotted with good will over the hard road, whitened by the moonlight, — Jupiter, like a large drop of celestial fire, dead ahead, to guide us from the fairy recesses of Vaucluse, back to the massive realities of Avignon.

May is warm weather in Provence and we approved ourselves highly for our sagacity in starting on our excursions in late afternoons, ignoring entirely the tyranny of the *table d'hôte* dinner from which we had long set ourselves free. The *table d'hôte* luncheon was always sufficient for a dinner, and our habit was to take afternoon tea, with a few extras, at about six o'clock, for our third meal of the day. And this we could pick up anywhere. Hence our delightful freedom to wander without interruption from five to ten, if we so desired, the loveliest hours of these meridional May days.

The following afternoon found us at Remoulins, which we had reached by train from the station known as *Pont d'Avignon*, across the Rhone, on the Villeneuve side. No one seemed to leave the train at Remoulins save ourselves and a tall young man with a pretty little maid. They disappeared at once. For our part we were gratified to find a wagonette hopefully awaiting at the Remoulins station all and sundry who knew too

much to miss the Pont du Gard. We thought a little slightingly of those young lovers, presumably indifferent to anything but themselves. Then we promptly forgot them as we crossed the river, the sparkling Gardon, and driving on several miles, turned in at the entrance to a tidy little inn, called the Servière. The house, in this fine, warm weather, was negligible, but the garden, enclosed with bamboo trellises, thickly covered with vines and furnished with small tables, had inviting suggestion for tea and rolls, eggs and strawberries by and by. At the present moment we were eager not to eat, but to behold. And what? Some remnants of the water works by which, in the year 19 B. C., the Gallo-Roman city of Nimes was supplied from the streams of Eure and Airan.

Certainly there could be nothing thrilling, romantic or exalted in the associations of the Pont du Gard as thus suggested. How could a mere municipal and utilitarian structure compete for impressiveness, we were asking ourselves as we hurried down the silent, shaded road leading to the river bank, — with such Roman remains as the imperial arches of triumph, the theatres, the arenas, with which Old Provence is so rich? Furthermore, had we not seen Roman aqueducts in the Roman Campagna? Thus ran our idle

talk, and then suddenly we were still. For some moments we had nothing more to say.

We had seen it. Spanning the river valley, a space of nine hundred feet, striking up with its burnt-orange-coloured arches tier above tier against the blue, there it was — the most unspeakably powerful and awe-inspiring work of Roman hands which we had ever seen. These are strong terms, but they are the ones in which I recorded my impressions on the spot, and I decline now to shade them or to modify.

"There were giants in those days, mighty men which were of old, men of renown," I heard M'sieur repeating the words presently, under breath.

"Yes," I said slowly, "when this was not too much to do, merely to give a provincial town a good water supply, what manner of persons must they have been, those Romans? As you say, giants."

"This power of the Roman civilization, its fearless daring to do the impossible at whatever cost, dwarfs our doings of to-day so pitifully," commented M'sieur pensively.

"We Americans build for a generation or two only," I added; "we build churches of inferior character; massive but ugly money-making houses; hideous battle-ships which last from seven

to eight years only, — thank Heaven! — and bourgeois, flimsy dwellings. What are we building to last even one century? And look at this glory, nearly two thousand years old!"

"Don't groan and yet I know how it hurts," laughed M'sieur. "I feel the same wound. In the old pagan world all was colossal, grandiose, permanent, mighty. With us all is ephemeral, hurried, trivial. But it is not only so in America. Modern Europe can show little of permanent excellence in architecture, since the cathedrals of the *Moyen-Age*. But the first thing now is to climb to that second tier, walk across to the other side, and return through the conduit itself."

"But where is that?"

"You see the space above the upper row of arches, the lesser ones? There is enclosed the cemented chamber by which the water was conveyed. I have read that it could easily be made water-tight now, so absolutely sound is its construction, after all these nineteen hundred years. It is the only part of the whole aqueduct where cement has been used."

Slowly, with increasing awe and wonder, we traversed the platform above the six basic arches whose piers are planted deep in the river bed, and passing under the mighty eleven of the central tier, we reached the farther shore.

We now climbed to the next level and from that high point stood to take in the lovely landscape of soft, wooded hills, valleys, and swift, crystalline river, singularly like scenes in our own Berkshires. Through aromatic shrubs, spicy in the sun, we scrambled to the entrance to the water-chamber, which passes above the thirty-five crowning arches. Surprised, we found that we could walk erect into and through it, for it is in reality nearly seven feet high by two wide. At first the darkness seemed to shut us in, but a moment later, with eyes accustomed to the light filtering in through a broken slab of the roof here and there, we discerned that we were not alone. Far down the dim vista two silhouetted figures held their ground; a tall figure, standing, masculine; a small figure, seated, feminine.

"M'sieur," I cried softly, "there are those young lovers we saw on the train when we came from Avignon. They got here ahead of us after all, although we drove."

"Precisely," was the composed reply. "He is putting the crucial question to her without a doubt, and by Jove! he must have thought, when they got into this conduit, that he could see her alone."

"It is tōo dreadful to invade their privacy. What shall we do — turn back?"

"No, that would be even worse than going on. They have heard us, you see, and are trying to look unconscious."

We tried also, as we scraped past the two between the stony, crumbling walls, to look unconscious, but I am afraid without success.

"When you think," I murmured, as we groped our way on towards the opposite end, "of the rival suitors, of the maiden aunts they had tried to escape by coming off here!"

"Well, I am not a maiden aunt," responded M'sieur, with some acrimony, "nor a rival suitor. We didn't hurt them."

"You can never know, my dear. That moment lost for him may have lost him the day. I may have reminded her of her older sister who opposes his suit, for instance."

"And I may look like the rival suitor she is weighing in the balance, and that may turn the scale. Yes, it is pretty bad, but — "

M'sieur was giving me his hand now to help me out into the light of day, for we had traversed the conduit's length, of nearly nine hundred feet.

"Never mind," I whispered, and stepped victoriously up to a path by no means easy of access. "Never mind. I looked back. He kissed her. All is well."

We found seats now near the river's edge and

drank our fill of the stupendous beauty, the almost savage grace of the colossus before us.

Extremely beautiful is the mellow ochre of the sun-baked stone against the sky, with the clear river below, the rich, green hills beyond; while, up the stream, an old town with its church spire rising amid the hills makes in itself a lovely picture.

Every arch framed an exquisite panel of jewelled green, azure and gold. One we found surpassingly effective, where an ancient dull yellow building rises tower-like from the cliffs and the river's edge and a picturesque water-stair leads down to the bright waves of the Gardon. And how the crickets chirped and how the nightingales sang!

Next on our program was to cross back to the farther side and walk down the river for a little distance; then sit in the sweet-smelling thyme and mint, heath and broom, again to gaze. While we thus gazed a valiant tourist in white linen climbed to the roof of the water-chamber and waving his hand to us, started to walk across with that as pavement. I hope he lived to tell the story, but the river was a hundred and sixty-five feet below; there was no parapet or coping and the broken slabs made perilous footing.

Miss Kingsley has put certain points concerning this stupendous memorial of the Pont du Gard, concisely, thus:

"One hundred and sixty feet in height above the river and eight hundred and eighty-two feet in length from hill to hill, the effect of the Pont du Gard is far more striking and impressing than any of the other splendid monuments the Romans left in Gaul. How it can have been built at all, how those enormous blocks can have been raised without any of the mechanical appliances of modern construction, and fitted so perfectly, without a touch of cement, fills one with wonder, especially in the curve of the great arches, consisting of three ribs side by side, of blocks which, when measured roughly proved each to be about five and a half feet long by two deep. . . . As we gaze on it to-day, the rugged severity of the design and the utter absence of any decoration only make it the more magnificent and impressive."

In the gloaming we sat in the inn garden of the Servières and ate our simple meal. That the eggs were new-laid seemed attested by the hens which circled about our table, attended by dogs and cats, in singular numbers and variety. The drive back to Remoulins and the short journey to Avignon followed. All the way we discussed which was more glorious, Vaucluse or the Pont du Gard. M'sieur says the latter, emphatically. I never knew him so enthusiastic over work of man.

PONT DU GARD.

Here we have our triptych, and a noble picture it forms to hang on what used to be known in the early sixties as Memory's Walls: in the centre Avignon, at the right Vaucluse, and on the left the Pont du Gard.

Our last day in Avignon was given to leisurely visits to the Musée Calvet and to two or three churches, none of which were highly, but all mildly interesting. The afternoon was spent in packing and at our favourite hour of five we left the hotel, which a fellow countryman who came to Avignon in his auto after " touring " all France, styled the best he had encountered.

A hired motor-car took us with our lighter luggage (the heavier had been forwarded to Arles by rail) through the fair fields of Provence for less than a dozen miles to Saint Remy, where we purposed to spend the night. We went a little off the direct route in order to pass near Maillane, the home of Mistral, and I sketched my impressions thus as we bade the chauffeur to slow down:

Around Maillane the air is loaded with the fragrance of the broom (genesta) now in full and gorgeous blossom, covering the ground; everywhere are olive orchards and level fields divided by hedge-rows or by the frequent screens of tall, close-set cypresses, which mark this part of Provence, — a defence against the *mistral.* The

roads are bordered by pine trees and beyond hay fields, through blossoming orchards, we catch glimpses of red roofs, and mellow-coloured plaster walls of isolated farmhouses. The landscape is bounded by the low blue range of the Alpilles, rising abruptly from the level plain.

We did not see Mistral's home, as we passed outside Maillane, but it is described as a simple country house, square and white, standing in a small, shady garden, behind a high wall and an iron gate. Mistral was born on a farm known as *le Mas du Juge* (the Farm of the Judge), facing the Alpilles at a short distance from Maillane. Let no one who travels in the way we chose, fail to read the exquisite first chapter of Mistral's *Memoires:* "*Au Mas du Juge.*" Having described the chain of the Alpilles, "belted with olives like the roads of Greece, a veritable belvédère of glory and of legends," he thus vitally touches point after point of his adored Provence:

"The Saviour of Rome, Caius Marius, awaited the Barbarians at the foot of these hills, behind the fortifications of his camp; and his triumph trophies at Saint Remy have been for two thousand years gilded by the sun. It is on these slopes that one finds fragments of the great Roman aqueduct which carried the waters of Vaucluse into the Arènes of Arles; conduit known to the people

of the country as the *Ouide di Sarrasin*, because through it the Moors of Spain made their way into Arles. It is on the escarped rocks of these hills that the Princes of Baux had their chateau-fort. It is in these aromatic valleys, at Les Baux, etc., that the lovely chatelaines of the times of the troubadours held their courts of love. It is at Mont-Majour, under the slabs of the cloister pavement, that our old Arlésien kings sleep. It is in the grottoes of the Valley d'Enfer, of Cordes, that our fairies still wander."

We reached Saint Remy at our favourite sunset hour, and stayed not until we had left the town behind us and reached the famous ruins of old *Glanum Livii* on their quiet colline. (This last noun is a useful French word in good and regular standing. It was once equally in use as an English word, but has fallen into obsolescence. Why should it not be revived?) We found ourselves alighting from the car, alone in the presence of two of the most graceful and most mysterious of Roman memorials, the earliest Arch of Triumph on Gallic soil and the Monument of Triumph, the best preserved work of its period in existence, so writers say. Each is strikingly beautiful, but I found their juxtaposition a curious detriment to the effect of each. The triumphal arch seems never to have led any-

where; the monument is too near it, and too irregularly placed to belong in the same picture. This for the present; but who can guess what surrounded these structures in their own day, gave perspective and relativity?

It has been customary to count the Monument as a mausoleum dedicated, according to the inscription on the north side, to their parents by the Julii, supposedly Gallo-Roman chiefs, in the first or second century A. D. The author of "Old Provence" urges upon us the fascinating theory that Julius Caesar, before leaving Gallia about 50 B. C., set up the Arch of Triumph to commemorate the surrender of Vercingetorix, and also the monument to Marius, his uncle, not as a mausoleum, but as a triumphal memorial. As for the inscription, that was added two centuries perhaps later, by the Julii, who "calmly appropriated a fine 'antiquity,' wrote their own names on it, and buried the respected corpses of their parents within a building originally intended for entirely different uses. . . . In the St. Remy arch is seen the influence of Greek workmen and the use of the Greek principle that monuments in the Corinthian style should never be too large." (Pointed instance of the Greek "horror of the too much!") "This is the smallest arch of its kind we know. . . . The carving on the north side

ARCH AND MONUMENT, ST. REMY.

represents Julius Caesar, a small man, with his hand on his tall captive, Vercingetorix, whose head is still preserved, while that of his conqueror has disappeared. On the northwest the personification of triumphant Rome is seated on a pile of arms. On the southeast Vercingetorix is represented chained to a trophy formed of a tree trunk, and beside him is the weeping figure of Gallia, conquered and a prisoner."

We all have our own personal likes and dislikes. Vercingetorix is so much to my liking that I dedicate to him a species of hero-worship and can never catch his somewhat perplexing name without a sense of elation and a pang of sympathy, — a mélange, I suppose, due to his valour and his fate. Hence I embrace with ardour this theory of Mr. Cook and do not propose to change it for any other. Henceforth beautiful Saint Remy means to me the young Avernian chieftain who drove imperial Caesar to his wits' end.

Twilight fell as we tried in vain to identify Winged Victories and sacred shields of Numa on the crumbling reliefs and we were glad to enter our own hired car and hasten back by the wooded road to the still town and the quaint little country hostelry called the Hotel de Provence. Guide books had told us that this was a comfortable

house, and although the entrance seemed forbidding, crowded and confused, I wish to record that a night spent there was a pleasure. At the same time I must add that, the Hotel de Provence being our first experience of a truly Provençal inn (the Hotel d'Europe in Avignon is simply continental), there were many surprises encountered. But this chapter is over-long already, and I will reserve comments on this subject.

Next morning we took time to see something of Saint Remy, famed for its flowers and seed industries; a depressed and silent little town, however, we found it, with the curious drabbi-shabbiness of the Midi heavy upon it. Then, with luncheon packed away in a goodly hamper by the obliging *Maitre d'hôtel* of the Provence, we prepared to explore our next "star" — Les Baux.

Therefore into the auto again, and on a dozen kilomètres through country growing more wild, rugged and mountainous, and then suddenly a silver-coloured mountain, jagged and cragged, with fantastic towers, steeples, cupolas and minarets, — who could tell what was built by man, what by nature? Presently a turn in the road brought us to close quarters with the strange scene. The weird, beetling, ruin-crowned crags

of Les Baux at the right of the road, and again a mountain rising in successive plateaux in the opposite direction; but between the two a perfectly level valley, verdant, rich and smiling. Down on its floor we saw an ancient walled enclosure which we learned was the scene of the Court of Love of good King René and also the Pavillon of Jeanne de Laval, his wife.

Leaving this vale behind and below, we pursued the road a little farther up the steep height into Les Baux. Before the Café Monte Carlo we stopped; here the population of the town (three hundred it numbers), were gathered, together with a few groups of visitors. There were tables and benches painted green set in the open before the Café, which struck us as not wholly impossible. The landlord was obliging and took kindly to the notion of bringing us the accoutrements of a meal instead of a meal itself. For a franc he furnished us with plates, cups and saucers and a large and weather-beaten Britannia coffee pot. We made our own coffee and ate our cold chicken, rolls, cakes and oranges merrily. As we finished, a nice, clean looking guide who had had a nice, clean blue eye on us ever since we entered Les Baux, came forward and led us up the steep and stony street beyond the inn.

At once we found ourselves between handsome Renaissance houses, all decaying and forlorn, yet still stately. The name of Porcelet was prevalent, but most in evidence that of Manville. The portal of a Protestant church of the fifteenth century with the celebrated device of the Huguenots: *Post tenebras lux*, interested us much. We came up from this corner to a little Piazza where stood the parish church, St. Martial, I think, which we entered and found fascinating. The left wall had been hollowed out of the primitive rock, the aisle next was Romanesque and the opposite aisle Gothic. The place was massive to a degree, in common daily use but sombre and full of impressiveness. A beautiful tomb of some great Lady de Manville in the chapel wall at left of choir, had above an inscription showing names of all the Manvilles buried there. The present Manville, — the Prince of Manville-Bianchi, — who lives at a chateau near by, below Les Baux, gives liberally of his wealth to keep the church in repair. We came out reluctantly, and hurried on and up, — the great ruins of the chateau always hanging over our heads, — between the rows of dead houses, in some corner of certain of which the families of Les Baux still make shift to live. So we emerged upon the open summit of the cliff, immediately below

LES BAUX.

the chateau, and what a sweep of country lay before us!

Our guide, who was most interesting and well-informed, pointed out many features of the vast panorama. There was the vast plain of la Crau, green and cultivated, to the southeast, with its ranks of cypresses, its farms and villages, the Rhone, *rapida fiume che d'Alpestra*, flowing on its winding way; while west from its banks stretched the silvery flats of la Camargue, whose silting sands are ever shifting under the sullen, changing flood of the *Rhone mort*. To the south lay the deep blue Mediterranean, — to the north the deep blue Alpilles.

Around us were the fantastic rocks and more fantastic ruins of the dead city; below, the sheer rock, sterile and relentless, but at its feet stretched a splendid garden of olives, mulberry and vines. Our guide had great pride in Les Baux and told us its people were by no means poor or unhappy. Their garden ground was very rich and productive; furthermore, had they not fifty able-bodied men of Les Baux employed in the quarry which M'sieur-Madame must have seen as they passed in ascending the cliff? The white limestone of Les Baux was in demand, and made the living of many families. No, no, they were by no means to be pitied.

Plainly our guide expected to lead us on from this point through what remained of the ruins yet unvisited, but M'sieur-Madame were otherwise inclined. Here, on this terrace, overlooking land and sea, we sat us down, bade our guide good-bye with a *douceur* to heal all wounds of disappointment, took out a book or two, brought for this very hour, and so yielded ourselves inwardly as well as outwardly to the charm of Les Baux. The place is a mystery, a marvel, a pain and a glory. Also it is indescribable.

The story of Les Baux begins, as far as records go, about the year of grace 975, when a deed of gift to the Abbey of Mont-Majour is dated. Early in the twelfth century the lords of Les Baux began to play a powerful part in Provençal history, being possessed of no less than seventy-nine towns, chateaux and fortresses. Many of them had part in the crusades, and many of the ladies of Les Baux were famous queens in the brilliant Courts of Love for which Les Baux became famous. The most winning personality connected with this strange stronghold is that of the good King René of Provence, musician, artist, poet, patriot, who brought hither his second wife, Jeanne de Laval, and made for her fair gardens and a summer pavilion down yonder in the green valley. René's official residence was

in the castle of Tarascon (now a prison). In 1481 all Provence, and with it Les Baux, passed to Louis XI and France. Its decline followed, and complete destruction overtook it in the year 1633, when Louis XIII, acting under advice of Cardinal Richelieu, called the ancient seat of feudal independence to stern account and demolished the walls of the chateau which had stood impregnable for seven centuries.

So complete was the ruin that Les Baux has remained from that time forsaken, deserted, the Pompeii of France, as it is often called.

"But in their prime of glory the Les Baux bore the titles of Princes of Orange, Counts of Provence, Kings of Arles, and of Vienne, and Emperors of Constantinople! What do you think of that?" asked M'sieur, closing his book, rising and beginning to pace the rock-hewn terrace.

"It seems to prove too much, do you not think so? But listen for a moment to John Addington Symonds. He says: 'They filled a large page — these Les Baux — in the history of Southern France. . . . Many troubadours frequented the castle and among the members of the princely house are several poets. Some of the family were renowned for beauty. We hear of a Cécile, called Passe Rose, because of her

exceeding loveliness; also of an unhappy François who, after passing eighteen years in prison, yet won the grace and love of Jeanne, Queen of Naples, by his charms."

"It didn't seem to require very much to do that," interrupted M'sieur. "It is time to go down and start for Arles, is it not?"

"Yes, in one moment. Let us just read another sentence: 'But the real temper of this fierce tribe was not shown among troubadours, or in the courts of love and beauty. . . . There is nothing terrible, splendid, and savage belonging to feudal history, of which an example may not be found in the annals of Les Baux.' That is a satisfactory summing up. *En avant!*"

So down from the grim and awful desolation of Les Baux we came, and down from the stern limestone crags into a fair land of green pastures and still waters. We entered then on the third stage of our journey from Avignon to Arles, that most beautiful drive in Provence, as it has been well called. Certainly no circuit could bind together so many stars of first magnitude in the story of Old France.

Mont-Majour was our next halt and our last before reaching Arles. From a wooded colline rising from the quiet country roadside, we saw lofty walls and a majestic machicolated tower,

ABBEY OF MONT-MAJOUR.

so halted, left the car and began to explore. With difficulty we realized that in the *Moyen Age* men reached the " Island of Mont-Majour " by boats from the Mediterranean. Here, according to legend, in the third century A. D., came St. Trophimus (I prefer Saint-Trophime), and here flocked to him his converts from the heathen native folk, made their confession and received absolution.

In the tenth century, on the shrine of Saint-Trophime, Benedictine monks founded the abbey, of a donation to which by the seigneurs of Les Baux we had just now heard. Mont-Majour remains, after the long encroachments of time, " *encore les imposantes ruines des plus anciennes et des plus puissantes de la France.*"

The whole place strangely reminded us of Heidelberg in its vast extent and massive, semi-preserved walls and towers. First of all, we entered the enormous chapel or church, so grand in its great vaulting but absolutely empty, save for two ruined tombs in the wall of the left transept chapel. The crypt was wonderful — a vast hexagonal chamber with pillars and the light of the strangest unearthly green tint coming through coloured windows. Then we visited the noble cloister, built in the thirteenth century, when all the world was building nobly in Provence.

The Holy of Holies of Mont-Majour is the

confessional of Saint-Trophime. Its sanctity made this a pilgrim shrine for centuries.

But our last discovery charmed us most. Crossing the sheep-cropped turf to the east of the abbey, starred with low daisies and clover, we reached a shaded nook, where trees thickly grown with ivy surround the beautiful, mysterious, miniature chapel of St. Croix. In perfect, unmarred preservation it stands, unscathed, and baffling alike time and curiosity, for whether it was built for a mortuary chapel for the monks of Mont-Majour for a baptistery or a mausoleum, it remains the despair of archeologists and architects.

Concluding to leave the question to them, M'sieur and I, finding our capacity for receiving impressions now full to running over, ran back across the clover, took our places in the car and gave the word, "*Maintenant Arles!*"

CHAPTER VI

A WEEK IN ARLES

Hotel du Forum, Arles,
Sunday, May —.

AT Mont-Majour we were in England; it might have been Whitby Abbey or Malmesbury, with its smooth turf, the grave beauty of its ruins, its cloistered shade; at Les Baux we were in a No-Man's-Land, and not far from the Val d'Enfer; in St. Remy we touched the glory that was Greece — the grandeur that was Rome; in Avignon we were in an Italian city; but here in Arles, at last we are truly in Provence. We are not only in Provence, we are in its *cor cordium,* a garden enclosed, into which the outside world cannot penetrate.

Reaching here last evening from Mont-Majour we have not had time sufficient to crystallize impressions into opinions, but my impression thus far is of a small but curiously autonomous state, rather than of a quaint old city. The

people you meet are gracious and gentle, but they go their ways with a certain dignity and independence, wholly devoid of curiosity; also devoid of the visible effort to please or impress, which one so often meets in those towns which we describe as "quaint." No, I should not use that word in describing Arles; its distinction is of quite another sort. Gray, massive, weather-worn, macerated like Assisi, it retains a lofty beauty, a sternness, even. For a sense of the imperial past underlies the remnants of superimposed mediaeval life, it seems to me, and strikes through even the superficial picturesqueness of costume and custom, to some minds the sole suggestion produced by Arles.

For this city is oldest old; founded by the Greeks even before Massilia. It was a seaport then; now it is twenty-seven miles inland. But in the age when the Crau and the Camargue lay beneath a great salt lake opening to the sea, Arles was, to the commerce of the day, what Marseilles is now.

Thus much for its antiquity, an antiquity unlike that of Marseilles and Lyons, because the proofs of it are visible on every side.

We drove into Arles by the inevitable straight platane avenue, broad, densely shady, but scarcely concealing that repellent dulness which

FRÉDÉRIC MISTRAL.

inheres in the outlying quarters of every town of the Midi thus far seen. But soon we struck into the really old city streets, narrow, curiously paved, winding as the lanes of a labyrinth. Now and then, across some vista we caught a glimpse of the great crown of the Roman amphitheatre. Then suddenly we curved into the quiet Place du Forum, and were driven past a statue of Mistral to the wide open door of this hotel.

Being hungry, we hardly stopped to look about the chamber which had been kept for us, according to M'sieur's telegraphed request, but betook ourselves at once to the *salle à manger*, dinner being then a-serving. There had been no chance for tea in the afternoon and for once *table d'hôte* seemed inviting. As we took seats at a small table we looked around us astonished. Provençal art had here run riot with startling effect. The walls were cleverly decorated through their entirety with characteristic scenes; the church of the Saintes-Maries in the Camargue; the crags and ruins of Les Baux; the cloisters of Mont-Majour and the like; while walking among these picturesque settings by two and two, or in festive procession, appeared graceful Arlésiennes in cap and kerchief. At the far end of the room, between two windows, hung prominently a portrait of Frédéric Mistral.

"Arles is Mistral's inner shrine, without doubt," commented M'sieur. "We must try conclusions this week or never, with the Félibrige."

"Count how many Arles we have to conquer!" I exclaimed. "Greek Arles, Roman Arles, early Christian Arles, mediaeval Arles, old-fashioned Provençal Arles, and the present-day Arles of Mistral and his confrères."

"If you can conquer the cooking of Arles you needn't fear the rest," said M'sieur, drily; "you don't seem to me, in view of your declared hunger, to attack that *bouillabaisse* in a conquering spirit."

"I have surrendered," I answered. "I know how very famous it is said to be, but I call it infamous. Let us move on to the *dindonneau*."

Not very long after we moved on to our room on the next *étage*, with the sense upon us that the dining room of the Hotel du Forum was stronger in pictorial art than in gastronomic. Our chamber, after the bright and dainty elegance of our Avignon apartment, seemed distinctly gloomy at this hour, but, as this is the best house in Arles, it may be well to record here what is to be expected in the average hotel of the Midi. I am not speaking of the fashionable resorts of the

Riviera, which we shall doubtless find quite different, but of the towns which retain their native provincial (or Provençal) character. The Hotel du Forum is kept by the Famille Michel, kindly people of education and consequence in the town, people disposed to do all in their power for the comfort of their guests. The house is plainly a centre of life for this part of Provence, a rendezvous of men of importance, among whom we are constantly trying to discover Félibres.

Our chamber is vast and shabby, with a dingy and dilapidated aspect clinging to the dark wall paper and all the appointments; the floor is tiled in dull red squares, which is very pleasing when kept spotlessly clean; this is not. There is no bureau or dressing table of any description (we learned later to expect neither in the Midi); there is a mantel-piece with a broken clock and rickety candle-sticks; a clock, M'sieur says, which will not go, and candle-sticks which you wish might; mirrors are found in a wardrobe and over the mantel, inconvenient for " doing " one's hair. There is a centre table, covered with a soiled and hideous tapestry cloth, which I have promptly folded and tucked out of sight, substituting therefor a " fair white linen cloth," which I have learned to carry with me in France for this purpose; there are two tall armchairs and a *chaise longue*, all cov-

ered in red velvet; there is a double washing stand with a goodly supply of towels in a very convenient dressing room. The casements are draped with stodgy tapestry, rich in ball fringe, beneath which hang curtains of Nottingham lace, — the only species of transparent drapery which I have thus far seen in France; lofty or lowly, in cottage, palace, sanctuary even (for I have seen it on high altars), — all light hangings in France are of this material.

What about the beds? They form the redeeming feature. They are luxuriously clean, and luxuriously comfortable. It is an active, not merely a passive pleasure to rest in them. I long even now for bed time to come. The linen sheets and pillow cases are embroidered with the Michel monogram, and are dew-bleached and, although coarse, as sweet and wholesome as sun and air and flax can make them. Ours are white, but I see plainly that it is the custom to begin to use them in their natural linen colour, and let them bleach gradually, "in the process of the suns," for piles of bed linen lie on tables in the upper hall, ready for use, of the dark, brownish hue. I should not like them on my bed!

Another feature of the hotel of the Midi strange to us, is that we see no women servants. Our room is cared for by a *valet de chambre*, and we

feel quite as if we were at sea, with stewards in attendance. The service is good, barring the inherent and inalienable lack of thorough cleanliness, but I miss a maid.

The sum of my observations after a reasonable amount of travel in "Latin lands," is that the Latin race, with all its undeniable superiority, lacks good taste, and lacks it essentially in interior household decoration. This is shown, in Italy as well as in France, in the habit of arranging flowers in a heterogeneous mass of incongruous colours; in the turbid wall papers and hangings; in the general lack of daintiness and simplicity, grace and charm.

We have been to Mass to-day in the church of Saint-Trophime. The exterior of the church is most beautiful, "the perfect flower of Provençal Romanesque;" the interior is not interesting. A funeral followed the service, to see which we waited, finding the ceremonies of asperging and chanting as mediaeval as the church itself. When we descended the steps, following the crowd of people, we observed a clever looking young artist, seated in the open square, sketching the wonderful portal through which the procession was passing. M'sieur had a glimpse over the artist's shoulder, and described him as working with a sure and trained touch.

Hotel du Forum, Arles, Monday.

Trinquetaille is Arles on the other side of the Rhone, the faubourg of mariners, mechanics and fishermen; whence the name of *duplex Arelas*, which in the third century A. D., was given the city. We walked along the *Quai de la Roquette* this morning, observing the very yellow Rhone, and trying to imagine where might have been the famous dockyards in which Caesar built his galleys for the siege of Massilia. Vain effort, since the sea has now so far receded! One small sloop was in process of construction under the river bank, and seemed to constitute the sole activity of the faubourg. No one seems willing to mention just when Arles was left stranded and ceased to be a port, but it could not have been before the twelfth century, because we read at that time of the Crusaders touching in their ships at Arles. The name Trinquetaille suggests fascination which the town appears to lack. We concluded not to cross to its precincts, and, remaining on the Arles side, we rambled on, stumbling soon into a silent and little visited picture gallery in a fine old priory, — the Réattu. This led, quite incidentally, to a visit of much greater importance. For the concierge of the Musée pointed out to us, just opposite, the remnants of the Palace of the Roman Emperor Constantine. We hastened over,

guided by her, and although the meagre, massive fragments of the building were not in themselves highly suggestive, the fact that Arles had been a favourite residence of Constantine the Great was made real to us by the sight of them. Here, in this river-side palace, he dwelt with his empress, Fausta, and here was born his eldest son. Arles became great under the imperial patronage, and Christianity, under imperial patronage, became the accepted religion of its citizens.

"Now, at last," I commented, "I can understand why that famous first great Council of the Church in 314 was held at Arles. Christianity here was distinctly under Constantine's wing. It always had seemed to me that Arles was a curiously remote and unimportant place to be chosen for that event."

"Much is explained when one realizes that Arles was in those centuries an important seaport and also geographically a centre of Christendom. You remember that much of Gallia to the north, with Lyons and Vienne for missionary centre, was already in the fourth century A. D. Christianized. Arles seems to have been to Constantine, the first nominally Christian emperor, what Lyons had been to Claudius and the earlier emperors. It was natural for every reason that he should call

thither the heads of the churches to settle their quarrel over the Donatists."

We had returned to the quay now and I was turning over the leaves of Roger Peyre's delightful French monograph on Arles.

"Listen to me," I exclaimed; "between 314 and 1275 Arles was the seat of nineteen great Church Councils. Furthermore, the Bishop of Arles held authority, — *ex-officio* apparently, — as metropolitan bishop of all Gallic Narbonensis, in the fourth century. In the middle of the fifth century this fact brought about the famous dispute between Bishop Hilary of Arles and Leo the Great, Bishop of Rome."

"This is all deeply interesting," said M'sieur, "and all builds up a cumulative case for the ancient glory of Arles. But you will remember that I am of a somewhat orderly turn of mind, and for the last half hour I have been suffering from a sense of the many carts we are putting before the horse. Here we are rushing on to Arlésien Church Councils of the *Moyen Age*, when we haven't seen — even from afar — the primitive foundation stone of Arles' greatness."

"Which is that? The Roman amphitheatre?"

"No, — that is generally given as the earliest monument here, but there is one earlier, the theatre. We know that the Greek colony here was

flourishing and important, so that Greek art and architecture were highly developed in Arles before the appearance of the Romans. The theatre was not built, probably, before the formal Roman occupation, and is often called ' Roman,' yet it is distinctly Greek work and of an earlier date than the amphitheatre, which is distinctly Roman. It is there that the wonderful ' Venus of Arles,' now in the Louvre, and other classic marbles, were discovered. The theatre is surely the starting point."

" You think we ought to see the ' sights ' of Arles in chronological order, then? "

" I think it will save a lot of confusion, at least, to attempt it. Wait a moment, and I will run over this small guide and make a scheme which we can follow or leave, as serves our turn."

I left M'sieur to his note-book and his fountain pen, placed upon the parapet of the Rhone, and walked back and forth, studying the gargoyles on the Grand Priory and enjoying the powerful river. Then, in a few minutes, came M'sieur holding up before me in his open note-book the following " Plan of Action for Seeing Arles: "

1. The Greek Theatre, last century B. C.
2. The Roman Amphitheatre, first century A. D.
3. The Aliscamps, Pagan and Christian Necropolis.

4. Musée Lapidaire, Pre-historic, Pagan and Early Christian Antiquities.
5. Palace of Constantine, fourth century A. D.
6. Church and Cloister of Saint-Trophime, twelfth century.
7. Musée Arlaten — Modern.

With our heads together over this outline, we threaded the narrow, winding streets back into the heart of the town.

"Very good as a spinal column," I commented finally, "but I don't agree to do those things one after another steadily."

"Nor I! These are the pieces of resistance, and two or three of them we have achieved already. They are to be interspersed with any amount of rambling about the market places, the shops, watching the pretty women and anything we like."

"What does make the women here so pretty, M'sieur?" I asked energetically. "I always heard that they were; but some way it seemed improbable that there should be a type in one small town of less than thirty thousand inhabitants different from the rest of Provence."

We had suddenly emerged from the dark channel of the Rue de la Calade upon a wide and sunbathed clearing. Through a tall iron grille M'sieur pointed down into a grassy enclosure, strewn with blocks of marble, surrounded in part

with a crescent of rising tiers of stone benches. In the centre rose two glorious Corinthian columns, supporting a fragment of sculptured entablature. The Graeco-Roman Theatre!

"Is not here the answer to my question?" I asked myself. "It is the Greek element which comes out still in the beauty of the women of Arles."

We found a somewhat intermittent attendant inside the grille, who presently gave us an entrance to the sunny field below. Here for a happy half hour we enjoyed ourselves and these graceful ruins. It gave accent to our pleasure to recall the fact that here Henry James, that most caustic and captious of all travellers who ever grumbled their way through Old France, found pure delight, and recorded his faith that "this spot is one of the sweetest legacies of the ancient world, . . . one of the most charming and touching ruins I had ever beheld."

For a space we were as wise as circumstances permitted us over the columns, one of Carrara marble, one of *breccio africano;* over the stage, the spaces for orchestra, chorus and dancing; the entrances; the marbles of pavement and benches, and the melancholy fact that the pious indignation of the Christians of Arles in the fifth century wrought the complete destruction

of all this pagan magnificence. Then we fell to talking again about the Arlésiennes. We had brought with us the first volume of Mr. Cook's admirable "Old Provence," and, discovering his diagnosis of the beauty of the women of Arles to coincide with my own, I read a few pages aloud, while the sun dreamed over the scattered shafts and broken marbles, and drew sweet odours from the blossoming grasses and wild flowers growing thickly around us.

"Like the columns which were set there by Greek workmen so many centuries ago, these women of Arles seem the immortal relics of a golden age that has, elsewhere, vanished from the earth," — thus Mr. Cook, in poetic enthusiasm. "Greek, Roman, Saracen, and Frank, have had their say in the moulding of those perfect features. But it is the Greek that has prevailed. . . . The soil itself of modern Hellas has not proved so favourable to the preservation of these noble racial distinctions; and even in Arles those exquisite refinements of line which give character and beauty are denied the male. . . . The pattern of the mint was fixed, once and for ever, by the Attic blood that the Phoceans brought to the Rhone Valley. Neither in Narbonne nor in Nimes; not at Avignon, not at Carpentras, not at Orange, has the same type survived; not

even at Marseilles, the first cradle of the fertilizing race."

On our way back to the Place du Forum for luncheon, we met several groups of young girls in their charming caps and spotless fichus, and I wondered if they would have been half as pretty without those soft, white folds framing in the throat and giving an indefinable touch of delicate austerity to the sumptuous lines of shoulders and bust. They are no fragile, spirituelle beauties, these Arlésiennes. James describes one as "of an intensely feminine type, yet wonderfully rich and robust, — and full of a certain physical nobleness." (On the whole, James must have been in a good humour at Arles.) I find this characterization accurate. The modelling of the face and neck are statuesque often to a degree, rounded, full and firm, and the skin milk-white rather than *brune*, while hair and eyes are usually dark. The manner of the women is of great repose, and they give an impression of being *molto contento*, and of all belonging in one happy family which asks no odds of anyone outside. If I ask a question, as I often do, in order to observe them at closer range, I find their manner not exactly vivacious, as with the ordinary Frenchwoman, but gracious, and to the last degree courteous.

Sometimes in passing a window in the narrow

street I catch a glimpse of some old gentlewoman behind a snowy curtain, the noble head framed by the dignified Arlésien cap, with its broad black velvet or silk bandeau, the white kerchief crossed on the quiet breast. The head will be just at the height of my elbow, and on the knees I am apt to see a book and a piece of knitting; often a cat is curled up in the deep window sill. Such a picture I have just brought home with me to love and to remember. The elderly Arlésienne, if less beautiful, is even more *distingué* than the young.

We stopped in at the little *papeterie* of Mlle. Maigre, in the Place du Forum, and I amassed a small, captivating leather-bound "Mireille" and a handful of Félibre literature. The *mistral* has begun to blow, and we decide to stay in and devote the afternoon to its less tempestuous namesake, Mistral of Maillane.

Arles, Tuesday, May —.

To-day we have visited *les Arènes* and the Aliscamps, both of which are indescribably imposing and impressive, and yet did not hold us very long. Later we went to the Musée Lapidaire in the great Place, opposite Saint-Trophime, and from that I thought we should never be able to tear ourselves away. The afternoon was rainy and nothing could have been better than to spend

THE ALISCAMPS, ARLES.

it within the compass of that small enclosure, in which the riches of successive races and religions lie compact, — the "most Roman thing out of Rome," of a surety. Certainly nothing save the Lateran museums approaches it.

But first I must go back to the morning's event. Not that I shall try to describe the amphitheatre. To what purpose? Having seen the Coliseum at Rome and the Arena at Verona, one can imagine without detailed description what this mighty and monstrous structure must be. After the Pont du Gard its bigness seems brutal, not noble, to me. It is the largest arena ever built on Gallic soil by the Romans, but less perfectly preserved than the later one in Nimes, which we hope to see to-morrow.

Having walked twice, on different levels, around the amphitheatre, we suddenly realized that rain was striking across the cavernous arches, and that we had no umbrellas. We dashed out into the *Rond-Point* (every town of the Midi has its *Rond-Point*), and looked around for possible shelter. Opposite the main entrance of *les Arènes*, where we stood, was a shop or office of some kind, with the sign: "*À l'Image Provençau.*" Quite uncertain as to what wares were being offered, or if any, under such a sign, we yet made bold to enter there, seeing sundry bits of artistic pottery,

leather, and a few prints and water colours disposed unobtrusively in a window.

A pretty woman in Arlésien garb came down a broad flight of stone stairs, into what appeared a species of atélier, at the sound of our entrance. We told her frankly that we had no idea of what *l'Image Provençau* stood for, but that we had run in for shelter from the rain. The lady was hospitable and sweet-spoken. *L'Image Provençau* appeared to signify the Provençal Print Shop. When she found us looking with interest at the pictures which hung about, she went to the stairs and called:

"Léo:"

There came then rapidly down to greet us, a young man of an alert and cordial manner, in whom we recognized the artist whom we had seen sketching the portal of Saint-Trophime on Sunday. M'sieur asked his name.

"Léopold Lelée. Lelée of Arles!" Then he it was who had won our hearts in Avignon, in the loan collection of the Papal Palace, by his water colours of Arlésien scenes. Without further ceremony we were friends. Soon we learned that Lelée, for eight years, has lived in Arles, devoting himself to the preservation of Arlésien types and to the creation of a distinctively Provençal art. Disdaining no handicraft in which art has part,

FESTIVAL OF ST. MARTIN'S EVE IN PROVENCE, LELÉE — ARLES.

he has worked out his designs in leather and clay, in wood and plaster, as well as in mural painting, and in the water colour work which is his true *genre*.

(We had already discovered that it is Lelée's designs which cover the walls of our Provençal *salle-à-manger*, at the Hotel du Forum.)

For an hour we lingered over a series of aquarelles, studies of typical Provençal scenes, full of local colour, and instinct with spirit, brilliancy and life. One charming sketch of the Chestnut Festival of Saint Martin we brought away with us, finding it irresistible. The Arlésienne feminine types, both of young and old, are here admirably delineated; the strongly marked characteristics of the homely room, the sense of gay good cheer and innocent merriment, belonging to this festival of the chestnut harvest, combine to convey the spirit of Old Provence with potent charm.

We left the *Image Provençau* with good hope of meeting its genial genius again while we remain in Arles, and also with the hope that the Provençal folk may not fail increasingly to respond to the efforts here put forth so persistently for the development of their art. Lelée's work wins favour fast in England; his charming water colour sketches illustrating Mrs. Gostling's "Auvergne and its People" having called out much favour-

able comment; but we cannot help the wish that his signature may long remain, " Lelée — Arles."

The rain letting up, for an hour or two, we called a carriage and drove along the Promenade de la Lice and about the old walls of the city, I having declared an end to my endurance of the torture pavements of Arles. I believe no device of man in common usage ever inflicted anguish so excruciating as those small, edgewise-set cobbles of the Arlésien streets. To avoid walking on these cobble stones is impossible, as the sidewalks, at the most two feet wide, are spasmodic, and wholly freakish, tapering off for every inequality of the house fronts to a mere curb. The pavements usually slant to a gutter in the middle of the street, and into this the household refuse is thrown, to be swiftly carried out of sight by the water pumped into it, in a stream sufficient for the purpose. A naïve sewer system, undoubtedly, but Arles does not smell as badly as most towns of the Midi!

Our drive ended with the Aliscamps, the *Campii Elysii*, or Elysian Fields, the renowned Roman and early Christian burial place of Arles. No place on earth, I think, is like it, and its great fame has come down to us through the centuries, immortalized by Dante in Canto IX of the Inferno, where he makes its long Avenue of Death

the model for his dreadful heated sepulchre of the Heresiarchs: —

> "And I . . .
> Soon as I was within, cast round mine eye,
> And see on every hand an ample plain,
> Full of distress and torments terrible,
> Even as at Arles, where stagnant grows the Rhone,
> . . . . . .
> The sepulchres make all the place uneven,
> So likewise did they there on every side."

Between the solemn cypress trees of the long avenue are ranged the ancient, covered Roman sarcophagi, sombre, moss-grown, and yet impervious to the tooth of time, with here and there a shattered Merovingian tomb. We entered near the lovely arch of St. Cesaire and at the far end saw the chapel of St. Honorat, the famous Apostle of the Iles de Lérins, who, late in life, became Bishop of Arles. We found this chapel curiously interesting, but altogether mediaeval, save for the very early foundation. Somewhere here was buried Saint Trophime, who in the third century was first missionary, and then first bishop of Arles, and who converted, not only the pagan people to Christianity, but their pagan cemetery into the most sacro-sanct Christian burial place of the Middle Ages. Here Christ himself appearing to his servant, consecrated the spot, and here the saint was buried. So holy was the Aliscamps

esteemed that in the twelfth century it became the pilgrimage shrine of the dead, whose friends would place their bodies at their dying request, in rude caskets, and let them float down the Rhone to Arles, the floating bier never touched by irreverent hands. They of Arles would receive the sad little craft and carry it to its desired haven, here in the holy and quiet field of death.

In the sixteenth century the body of Saint Trophime was removed to his church in the great square, and from that time has dated the decay and spoliation of the Aliscamps. Many of its finest tombs enrich the Louvre. In 1564 Charles IX, journeying through Provence, perceived great treasure in these classic memorials, and made gifts of large numbers of them to members of his family. In 1635 the Marquis of Saint-Chamond obtained thirty sculptured sarcophagi at one blow of the consuls of Arles. At about the same time the brother of Richelieu took away three of great beauty to decorate his villa, and so the work went on. There is satisfaction in knowing that Arles itself was wise enough to retain a number from the general wreck. These we found and studied in the Musée Lapidaire.

Which brings me back to our afternoon in this marvellous little museum. But do not turn the leaf hastily, thinking to escape the tedious at-

ROMAN SARCOPHAGUS, MUSÉE, ARLES.

tempt to describe a collection of broken marbles. Recognizing the task as impossible, I will only record our general impression of the singular value, the extraordinary richness here to be found and our purpose to go again while we stay in Arles. In particular we admired the pagan sarcophagus of Hypolitus; its mythological and symbolical figures held us long in fascinated study. One pathetic tomb, possibly Christian, adorned with garlands, — that of the little Chrysogone, — bears in large characters the words: *Pax Æterna*, and the touching inscription in Latin:

> *" Daughter very sweet, very innocent and very dear, dead at the age of three years, two months, twenty-seven days, and whose parents will mourn her all the time of their existence."*

Arles, Wednesday, May —.

We spent all last evening reading " Mireille." Surely it has all that Lamartine claimed for it when he wrote a friend in 1859:

" I have read Miréio. . . . Nothing has yet appeared to equal it of the national sap of the Midi, fecund, inimitable. There is in it the virtue of the sun. I have been so struck in spirit and in heart that I have written an *Entretien* on the poem. Tell this to M. Mistral. Yes, since the Homerides of the Archipelago, there has

flowed forth no such fountain of primitive poetry. I have cried, as have you: It is Homer!"

Really it seems to me that a stranger cannot feel the inner spirit of Provence, its pathos, its charm, its smell of the soil, without the interpretation of this pastoral. If only it were not so grievously sad! But I love Mistral's version, in the eleventh canto, of the landing of the Maries at the Camargue and their proclamation of the name of Christ:

"At that name the noble earth of Provence seemed shaken with joy; at this new voice the forest and the moor trembled through and through, as a dog which, feeling his master approach, runs to welcome him."

Then the preaching of Saint Trophime in the Theatre of Arles, the falling before him of the Venus, the penitence of the people, are keenly interesting, read thus on the spot.

But the most exquisite touches are given to Mireille herself, the sweet, innocent little pearl of Provence; to the description of her Arlésien costume in Canto VII — above all to her canticle, with its pathetic refrain:

"O Saintes Maries, you who can change to flowers our tears, incline quickly your ears to my sorrow."

The story of her death in the church of the

Saintes Maries in the Camargue is quite too sad to read.

We no longer wonder at the hold Mistral has on the affections of the people of Provence.

To-day we have spent in Nimes, which we reached early in the forenoon after an hour's railroad journey. We are glad to-night to return to the homely hospitality of Arles, and yet, if I were obliged to live in either town, I should choose Nimes. Arles is lovable; Nimes is livable. On the whole, we seemed, despite its splendid Roman remains, to pass from the antique to the modern world; for the streets of Nimes are broad and well paved; the plumbing is concealed, a method which we prefer; and smooth pavements soothed our feet after the agonizing cobble-stones of Arles. Streets and boulevards are lined with trees giving delightful shade, and an air of prosperity and well being, of cleanliness and gaiety struck us forcibly after the grave and massive silences of Arles.

We walked directly from the Gare to the beautiful Jardin de la Fontaine, the deep shade of which we found most welcome, as the sun was blazing in cheerful Provençal fashion. Little groups of babies and *bonnes* and bright-eyed school children clustered about the stone benches, and everywhere the terraces were framed by marble balus-

trades, while stately stairs led up to ever higher levels. From recesses in the hill, Mont Cavalier, flows out the far-famed fountain of Nimes, with inexhaustible volume and momentum. Down where we stood the clear, sparkling water filled pool after pool with its vital flood, tore its way beneath the marble bridges, and gave an enchanting lustre to the whole scene.

We stood long to study, below the level of the bridge, the splendid Doric columns and architrave of the ancient bath which stood here in the days when Nimes was the powerful Roman city of Nemausus. We were vastly interested to find that it was to augment the supply of water for these baths that the Pont du Gard was constructed, fifteen miles away.

The *jardin* is a charming mixture of eighteenth century formal landscape-gardening and of classic remains, the Nymphoeum close at hand adding its touch of antiquity. We did not climb to the Tour Magne on the summit, rising behind the garden, but were content to save our strength for the long day before us. A carriage at the entrance furnished us with a particularly good cicerone in the shape of a *cocher*, and under his guidance we drove about until hunger and heat drove us to a café for luncheon.

As we passed along the Quai de la Fontaine

ROMAN ARENA, NIMES.

our *cocher* surprised us with the information that all these houses, plainly aristocratic residences, are the homes of Protestants. "All the rich people of Nimes, all the influential, the better class, are Protestant. We have over twenty thousand of them. They have five churches," he added with pride, perceiving the impression his information was making. At our request he drove us past two of these churches. An open Bible sculptured above the entrance of each was significant; below was the sentence:

"Lord, to whom shall we go but to Thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

We drove on musing. Had the cheerful, wholesome aspect of Nimes, so unlike that of the typical town of the Midi, some connection with this Protestant element?

The amphitheatre of Nimes is magnificent, and quite the most effective I have seen, in France or in Italy. It is favourably placed and has been finely restored, an effect of splendour, suggestive of its prime, being given by the snow-white marble of the cornice against the glorious blue of the sky. The gable and pediment of the chief entrance, showing a relief of gladiators in combat, has been finely preserved, and altogether this arena imparts a festal suggestion quite different from the usual sombre oppressiveness of Roman arenas.

Our *cocher* left us at the Hotel Luxembourg for luncheon. For all the superior size and facilities of Nimes we were not impressed by this house as offering greater cleanliness or comfort than our Arlésien Hotel du Forum. I begin to think that in the Midi Anglo-Saxons only find what to them seems necessary to comfort in places which Anglo-Saxons have marked for their own. What belongs wholly to the Midi savours a little too strongly of the Midi for our taste.

We came out after an hour of rest from the hotel into the small contiguous park, and stood to mark the memorial statue of Alphonse Daudet, native of Nimes, the genial creator of Tartarin. Figure and face possess a peculiar charm; the man must have been graceful, whimsical, full of humour and penetration, and a visible embodiment of the artistic temperament.

Our short afternoon was given to that darling of the gods, if I may so name it, the Maison Carrée, the most perfect Corinthian temple outside Greece. Some one says it is worthy a golden casket to shelter and enclose its perfect proportions. After mature deliberation we decided to buy no photograph of this *chef d'œuvre*, for the reason that we ourselves had always been misled by the prints of it which one sees in magazines and books into thinking it like the Madeleine and a

hundred other structures of the Graeco-Roman type to which we are frankly indifferent. Seeing the Maison Carrée is believing in the utter grace and balance of its proportions, in the marvellous mellow tone of the marble, in its perfect harmony and symmetry which make you look and look and long to look again. Its size is far from imposing, for it is but eighty-two feet long by forty feet wide, and forty feet high, and yet it is by no means diminutive. I think I found distinct relief in a Roman structure of that first century A. D., which was not enormous or impressive by its bigness. Surely proportion is a greater thing than size. If not, as I remarked to M'sieur, a convention hall in Chicago would be more admirable than the Maison Carrée in Nimes.

When we could leave off gazing at the exterior we ascended to the portico of thirty perfect columns and thence entered the small museum which now constitutes the interior. It seemed so slight a thing compared with the Lapidary at Arles, despite the small, celebrated broken-to-bits-and-put-together Venus of Nimes, that I think we should have hardly stopped had it not been for the coins. I had happened to read something concerning this very fine collection of ancient Roman medals and money, and especially of the specimens of that rare "*medaille à pied de san-*

glier," one of the earliest and most curious coins of Gallia.

Glancing along the glass cases devoted to the collection, which extend the whole length of the small museum, we saw that they were all the gift of a certain M. —— of Nimes, a numismatist of distinction, and a donor of generous public spirit. We searched through case after case for the boar's foot medal, as I really wished to see it. When we reached the end of the aisle M'sieur called my attention to a portrait of an elderly gentleman, which hung above our heads.

" That would appear to be a portrait of the collector and the giver of the coins to the Maison Carrée," he remarked.

Reading the inscription, I was about to agree with him, when the *gardien*, an obliging little man, came up to ask if we were finding what we looked for. Quite innocent of any desire to " make a hit," I replied that I wished to find the boar's foot coin. The man looked at me in evident surprise, hurried with a smile of gratification to point out to us in a case, thus far overlooked, the strangely sculptured medal, from whose outer edge a carefully wrought boar's foot protruded, — assuring us that it was one of the very earliest Roman coins known in Gallia. Then, leaving us to our interested study, he withdrew to the en-

trance corner, where some one was seated a little out of sight in a leather-covered chair. To our surprise, in a moment there stood at our side a venerable old gentleman in whom we instantly recognized the original of the portrait just above us, and therefore the donor of the collection.

The *gardien* excitedly gave us to understand that M. —— craved introduction to us, hearing that we were Americans and that we wished to see the *medailles à pied de sanglier*."

There followed one of the most delightful encounters we have had in France, for our aged numismatist was a man of profound learning and kindliest courtesy, and gave us the great pleasure of his own description and explanation of his splendid collection. When we came away he accompanied us to the glorious portico, where the sun was making long lanes of rosy light between those sculptured columns, wishing us, with Gallic vivacity, — peculiarly charming in a man of nearly ninety years, — "Bon santé," "Bon voyage," Bon arrival in America, and every other kindly wish in the French repertory.

"And they try to tell us that a little learning is a dangerous thing!" I murmured, as we turned down the Boulevard Victor Hugo toward the Gare.

"At least a little is safer than none!"

M'sieur now produced from his pocket a handbill which he had found somewhere in Nimes, announcing a "*Grand Fête Provençale*" to be given in the "*Amphitheatre Romain de Fréjus,*" on May —, "*sous la Presidence d'Honneur et la Presence effective de Frédéric Mistral.*" The fête was the rendering of MIREILLE, Opera in four acts, "*tiré du Poème de Frédéric Mistral, Musique de Ch. Gounod.*" For information address "*la Mairie de Fréjus.*"

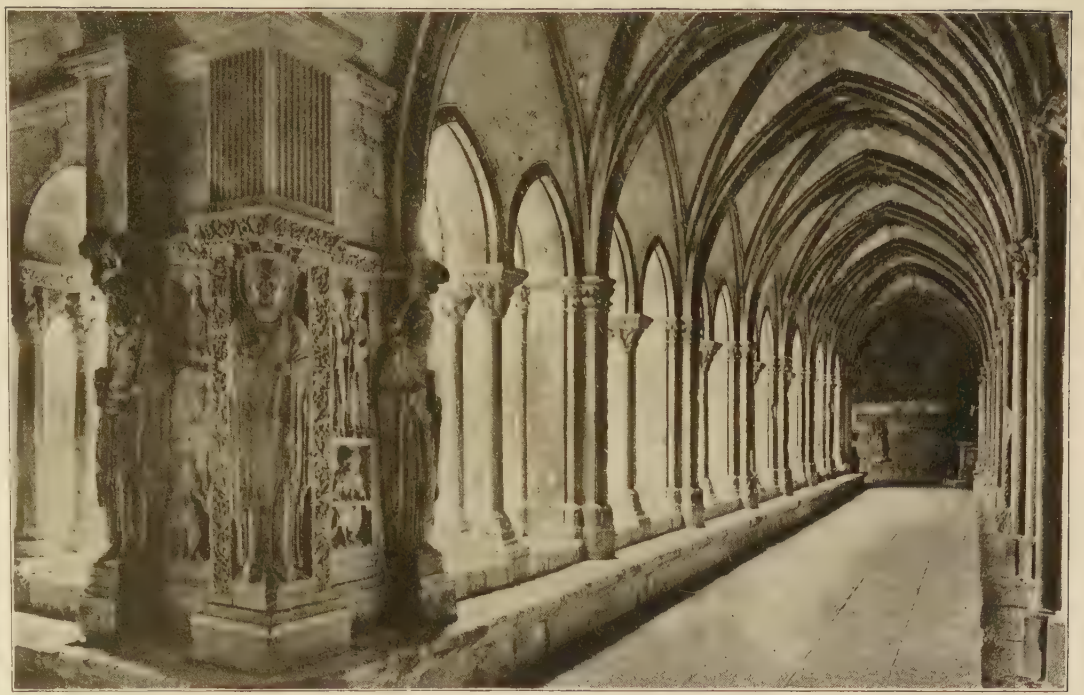
"What do you say to that?" challenged M'sieur.

"That I should address the Mairie de Fréjus instantly," I rejoined promptly. "A Mistral poem made into an opera by Gounod and given in a Roman amphitheatre of Old Provence! What could be more apropos? And we shall be leaving Arles, as you know, just in time to take this in on our way to Cannes."

"I wonder if we could stay in any hotel in Fréjus," said M'sieur, reflectively. "I doubt if any has been built since the days of Caesar, and they might be musty."

I was already turning over the leaves of my Baedeker.

"Fréjus will not do at all — that is certain. I would not risk either one of these hostelries and the place seems stranded now on some alluvial



CLOISTER OF ST. TROPHIME.

deposits and must be unwholesome. But St. Raphaël, only two miles away, and directly on the sea, has good hotels and we can stay there for a night or two perfectly well."

Thus, unexpectedly, we shaped the program of the week to come.

Arles, Thursday, May —.

Our first morning hour was given to our beloved Musée Lapidaire. We realize now that our time for these classic glories of Old France is drawing fast to a close. We hovered lovingly around the noble busts of Augustus and of Livia, and of certain enchanting little children; the richly sculptured Roman tombs; the graceful pagan altars of Apollo and of Leda; the marvellous scriptural bas-reliefs on the Christian sarcophagi. Then leaving the Musée for the last time, we crossed to the church of Saint-Trophime and spent another hour, how lovely, but how different! in its cloister. Surpassingly rich are these dim, vaulted arches, surrounded by the inexhaustible detail of mediaeval sculpture. Mrs. Van Rensselaer well says: " In all the south none of all these (cloister walks) is quite as beautiful as Saint-Trophime. . . . There is nothing more thoroughly Provençal than this. . . . If one wanted to dream out his days in the soft, slum-

berous atmosphere of a dead and yet still-living past, and to feed his dreams upon poetry made tangible, he could not do better than . . . shut himself up in the cloister of Saint-Trophime. . . . The four contrasting arcades seem a medley of things Greek and Roman and Byzantine, Northern and Southern, Romanesque and Gothic, legendary and fantastic, all woven into a magical mesh of loveliness."

The immediate prospect of seeing "Mireille" rendered impelled us this afternoon to stay in quietly, in order to finish reading the poem itself, and to learn a little more of the Félibre movement.

On our journey from Avignon to Vaucluse we had stopped at the station of Gadagne; not far away, in the charming open country, in sight of the Gorge of Vaucluse, shielded by a grove of oaks, watered by a spring, is found the Villa Font-Ségugne, home of one Paul Giéra, fifty years ago. Giéra was one of a little group of enthusiastic students centring in Avignon, who had caught up an academic sentiment for a Provençal revival, and heating it in the fires of their own poetic imaginations, had suddenly made of this a controlling purpose. On the twenty-first of May, 1854, this group, numbering seven that day, had met at Font-Ségugne. Then and there it was decided to wait no longer on the tardy and uncer-

tain movements of others, but themselves to form a band for the one purpose of reviving the language of the Troubadours and promoting a Provençal literature.

As with the Pre-Raphaelite Brethren in England, in the year 1848, as with all such associations when men are young, a name seemed vitally needed. Mistral, who was one of the seven (the others being Giéra, Roumanille, Aubanel, Tavan, Mathieu, Brunet), quoted an ancient legend familiar to him in Maillane, in which the word *félibre* was used, apparently designating a scribe.

" Here goes for félibre! " was the unanimous cry. " To the health of the Félibres! "

In turn each man contributed a word built from the new name as a root, and a whole nomenclature sprang into existence, as: *félibriser*, *félibrée*, *félibréen*, with *Félibrige* for the inclusive title of the new association. The day, May the twenty-first, being the day of Sainte-Estelle, was adopted as that of an annual fête; a periodical, *l'Almanach Provençal*, was projected, and, finally the cigale, or cicala, was chosen as the device of these new Singers of Provence.

The movement thus initiated has grown wide and strong. Chairs of Provençal languages have been created in the Sorbonne, in the Universities of England, Germany and the United States.

Strengthened by Mistral's great fame, the Félibrige has become a national movement, including in particular the Renaissance of the Catalan tongue, and spreading through all parts of France where the *Langue d'Oc* was once spoken.

Among the Félibres, Mistral has become invested with a sort of pontificate, and his two greatest poems, "Mireille" and "Calandel," written in Provençal rhymed verse, and translated into French blank verse, remain the great epics of this Renaissance. "Mireille," it has been said, was virgin honey; "Calandel," the lion's mane. "Mireille" depicted the Provence of the Crau and the Camargue, "Calandel" the Provence of the mountains and the sea.

Arles, Friday, May —.

Mr. Pennell's pen-and-ink sketches of the church of Saint-Gilles make it impossible not to visit it when within eleven miles. M'sieur and I, therefore, embarked on the Camargue railway once more, and traversed the flat, desolate plain with its shallow pools and lanes of water to the dreary little village.

St. Gilles itself is intolerably dirty and evil-smelling, and when we reached the church on its hillside I think, for all its magnificent triple portal, we felt black decay and grim grotesqueness

predominant over beauty or charm. And yet it is a richer and more wonderful façade than that of Saint-Trophime, even, and the longer we stood in the small and empty market place and studied it, the more the wonder of it grew. By many critics Saint-Gilles is counted the finest church in Provence, by reason of the marvellous freedom and power shown in the sculptures of the frieze of the portal, which represents scenes in the life and passion of our Lord. This frieze rests upon a cornice which is filled with forms of wild imagination: — griffins, centaurs, men-faced lions, hyenas, dwarfs and endless monstrosities, typifying the evil passions of mankind supposedly, but grotesque rather than impressive to our day.

Entering the church we found it nearly dark, save for a few candles on a distant altar where a low mass was being chanted, a few women only kneeling in the gloom. We waited until they dispersed, hoping in vain for some official to appear who might conduct us down to the famous crypt. No one being forthcoming, we returned to the broad morning light of the market place. Here, at a rather pinched fountain, a woman was filling her brass pitcher, and of her we asked if any one could be found to show us what we wished. Leaving her pitcher, the woman kindly led us back into the church, explaining that one of the

curés would be the only proper person. She advanced boldly to the sacristy door, pushed it open, and disclosed a perfect Rembrandt: three ecclesiastics in their berettas were seated around a table, their dark, serious faces illumined by the light of a single candle. We drew back, distressed to intrude upon their council, but our guide was in no way embarrassed. With scant ceremony she told the priests that if they could not conduct us she would do it herself, seeing we had come from a distance; then insisted upon their providing us with candles. This was done, courteously, and we were led down into the splendid Romanesque crypt, which we found well worth the effort made. We hope our good woman of the fountain did also! She showed us various tombs and statues of Pilgrims and Popes of long dead centuries, but her memory of names and dates was so bizarre that I shall not attempt to record them.

Returning to the outer world for the second time, we bade our kindly guide good-bye, and while she hurried back to the fountain, we made our way down the steep street, marvelling greatly that this forlorn village was once a mighty countship and seat of the head priory of the Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem. The horrors of the Crusade against the Albigenses in the thirteenth

PORTAL OF CHURCH OF ST. GILLES.

century seemed to blight St. Gilles as with a curse, as they have so many other once prosperous places in Old France.

This afternoon we have given to a farewell walk around Arles, visiting once more its mighty monuments, and ending with an hour of vivid entertainment in the Museon Arlaten. Here again we met the dominant influence of Frédéric Mistral. This museum of all things Provençal was founded largely through his initiative in 1897, and when, in 1904, the Nobel prize of one hundred thousand francs was awarded him, he devoted it to this enterprise. Here are scenes representing the rural life of Old Provence; Christmas Eve, a visit to an accoucheuse, and various characteristic events faithfully and artistically carried out. And here, in all its grinning, scaly ugliness, was the *Tarasque*, the ancient dragon of the Rhone Valley, conquered by St. Martha, — the pride of Tarascon. This image appears to be a replica.

I have been turning back the leaves of my note book on the "Constellation of the Kite." The stars of it have all been numbered now, and we say farewell to the Rhone and go trailing off down the Riviera.

CHAPTER VII

"AWAY TO THE SEA"

"The limpid sea, that sea serene, where fleet
The whitening sails innumerable ply,
That crisps the soft, wet sand about thy feet,
And mirrors back the azure of the sky; —
That ever-smiling sea, — God poured its flood
From out His splendour with a lavish hand,
To bind the brown-hued peoples of thy blood,
With one unbroken, scintillating band.

"Arise, arise, renewed, O Latin race,
Beneath the great cope of thy golden sun,
The russet grape is bubbling in the press,
And, gushing forth, the wine of God shall run.

"Upon thy sun-kissed slopes, on every side,
The olive grows, the tree of peace divine,
And all thy lands are crownéd with the pride
Of thy prolific, broadly-spreading vine.
O Latin race, in faithful memory
Of that, thy glorious, ever-shining past,
Arise in hope toward thy destiny,
One brotherhood beneath the Cross at last!

"Arise, arise, renewed, O Latin race,
Beneath the great cope of thy golden sun,
The russet grape is bubbling in the press,
And, gushing forth, the wine of God shall run."

(From Mistral's "Ode to the Latin Race," first recited at the Fête of the Montpellier, in 1878.)

WHEN we arrived at the Hotel Continental in St. Raphaël we found ourselves in the midst of gay parties of people, all bent on the same errand as ourselves: to attend the " Mireille " Fête in the Fréjus amphitheatre. There was nothing in St. Raphaël to arouse enthusiasm save the sea; and the little bay on which the hotels and villas are built is tame and quiet.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, in the fine May weather, we took a landau and joined the procession following the straight white road to Fréjus. This ancient port of Julius Caesar, to which he sent the two hundred galleys taken from Mark Anthony after the battle of Actium, lies now two miles inland, and has an indescribably dreary forlornness. Even the gay cavalcade of automobiles, wagonettes and omnibuses pouring into its sad-coloured streets; even the arches wreathed in the national colours, and bearing the device: " *Fréjus à Mistral*," failed perceptibly to enliven the scene. However, our spirits reached concert pitch when we entered the precincts of the Roman amphitheatre outside the town, with the merry multitude, and found our seats reserved just before the proscenium. Then we looked around us, at a scene of curious interest, the " Bread and Games " of the Roman populace revived in its own Roman

setting after a lapse of nearly two thousand years. What remains that belonged to this place in the day of Caesar's power?

I asked the question of M'sieur. To my surprise, he replied, soberly:

"Everything." Then added, "Everything essential. The ground beneath our feet has known no upheaval. The sky above us is the same in tone and tint, in depth and glory that the Roman pleasure-seekers looked up into, as they sat where we sit now. The walls which surround us, though broken and stripped of ornament, are the walls which shut them in to their diversion as they do us. As for the human part of it, — there are differences, but I should think very superficial. The same nature with all its needs and cravings belongs to us here to-day which belonged to a like company of the year 200 A. D."

"At least our pleasures are less cruel," I commented.

"I am not perfectly sure of that," said M'sieur; "perhaps the pitting of beasts against each other and even against men, grossly and obviously brutal as it was, did less harm than is done to-day by our demands for the sacrifice of the fine flower of life by the men and women whose profession is the stage."

I became too much interested in watching the crowd gathering closer around us, to continue so serious a conversation. Also there were signs that something was about to happen. Was it not time perhaps for the " effective presence " of Mistral itself to be in evidence?

The only scenery consisted of groups of small pine-trees at the sides of the proscenium. These extended right and left, forming wings behind which we caught glimpses of the actors in gay costume awaiting their calls. Beside us sat a beautiful woman with her little son, who, we found, spoke a few words of English. To him we turned when, presently, a gentleman in citizen's dress made a short speech from the stage which we failed to understand.

" What did he say about M. Mistral? " I asked eagerly.

" Madame, he is not coming," replied the small boy, carefully; " he is too old."

It was singularly, fatally final. Eighty-one is without doubt a good old age; but one could hardly resist asking the question:

Was he not also then too old when the honour of his presence and presidence was announced so positively?

But to what use? Let the play go on without Mistral, since it must, and no one but ourselves

seemed particularly surprised at his non-appearance.

But we found soon that the opera was to go on without a *Mireille*, as well as without a Mistral, for the experienced opera singer who took the title rôle and sang it to the wild delight, let it be said, of the audience, was stout, middle-aged, and might some time since have been bereft of that angelic innocence and flower-like delicacy characteristic of the darling child of Provence. Vincent was better, being less mature, and wearing his rue with a difference. Altogether the performance, while delightful in many ways, was singularly nonchalant and easy-going. The pathos and passion of the original tragedy have been eliminated, in order to make a melodrama in which everybody shall be satisfied, earthly-wise, in the end; and even Gounod's music cannot redeem such a composition from commonplaceness. However, the music was charming, as were the Arlésien costumes, and the graceful *farandole*. Despite the frank and frequent invasions of camera fiends on the upper arches above the stage, and the casual strolling into the open of the players, incidents calculated to weaken any illusions we might have cared to cherish, we enjoyed the occasion, the audience, perhaps, even more than the opera. Many of the parties had

brought voluminous lunches with them, and between the acts formed vivacious picnics in little circles. The men were always courteous and dignified; the women always carefully painted as to lips, cheeks, eyelids. I can plainly see that in reprisal for our American horror of this method of adornment, the Frenchwoman looks upon us as simply not having completed our toilets. Who shall say, at this stage of evolution, which is the real barbarian?

The lady whose little son had informed us of the reason for Mistral's non-appearance, attracted us the more that her use of paint and powder was singularly restrained for a Frenchwoman of fashion. We were glad when she spoke to us at the close of the performance, and I was interested to ask her if she supposed other Americans besides ourselves were likely to be in the amphitheatre.

"I do not think many," she replied, "for you know this is the *morte saison* for Americans. There is one young lady here, however, in the audience, from America, a little, little lady. She is seated far down yonder in the first row, in order to understand the actors better. She came here from Aix in the auto with us, but she goes on to Cannes now alone. Would you like perhaps to meet her? She is, I assure Madame, a person

très chic, très gentille, très interessante. She has intimacy with Provençals of distinction who have introduced her; she has been my guest in Aix."

We cordially desired the introduction and in another moment I was having a beautiful time chatting away in American to a delicately pretty young American lady, who fulfilled the description, being *chic, gentille* and *interessante* beyond doubt. She was Miss Kate Mathers, of Springfield, Mass., was somewhere in the middle of the thirties, I guessed, and belonged to the type which we call at home, " real folks."

It soon appeared that our French lady was in haste to start on the long auto ride back to Aix, and Miss Mathers hurried her off with affectionate partings as soon as we passed the exit to the amphitheatre.

" Madame —— is a relative of the poet Mistral," she told us then; " is she not charming? She has been most hospitable and kind."

Instantly I felt a desire to care for our new friend in place of her French hostess; plainly she was far from strong; carried herself, however, despite a slight lameness, with much self-reliant freedom.

" Are you alone now, Miss Mathers? " I asked. " Being Yankees questions are in order."

" Of course they are. I am alone but I do not

mind at all. I am familiar now with this part of the country, for my sister and I have spent a good many months together in this region of Provence. I am going on this evening to Cannes, and after a little rest there, to Bordighera."

"Why not come with us for the night? We are at the Continental in St. Raphaël?" M'sieur interposed. Plainly he was greatly interested in Miss Mathers.

She laughed.

"I am a creature of whimsies, I *guess*. You see I do not forget my native language! St. Raphaël happens to be a bore to me. It has nothing to say to me, for some reason. Cannes I love and there is a Hotel Gonnet there which remains open even in this season; it is a house where I am always comfortable and like to stay."

We had now reached our carriage, standing waiting in an interminable line, and Miss Mathers was prevailed upon to drive with us to the St. Raphaël station, there to take a seven o'clock train for Cannes. But before we had driven the first mile we had made two discoveries and a decision: first, we were both charmed with Miss Mathers, and felt that the Riviera as interpreted by her would take on greater interest to us; also she appeared to like us, declaring herself starving

for Americans; second, we perfectly agreed with her that St. Raphaël was featureless and that there was not the slightest object in remaining there over a second night. Our decision was, to hurry to our hotel, put our things together (Miss Mathers' luggage had gone on to Cannes by *grande vitesse* from Aix), and ourselves depart for Cannes and the Hotel Gonnet by the seven o'clock train.

Thus it happened that we awoke next morning with the glorious bay of Cannes spread to the horizon before our windows, laughing in the sun, blue as a great translucent sapphire as it lay between the Esterels westward and the Point de la Croisette to the east.

"At last," exclaimed M'sieur, "we reach the Côte d'Azur and the Mediterranean! That harbour of St. Raphaël might have been a cove on an inland lake in Massachusetts."

"*Parfaitement*, Monsieur-Madame!" I responded, laughingly. "This for me! I love Cannes. I feel that already, even if it gives us nothing wild and picturesque. Everything, to be sure, has an air of having been completely finished off as far as you can see, along the shore, but the whole situation is lovely and appealing. As you say, to see the sea, the Italian, Spanish, Greek, African Mediterranean, from its French

soil, seems to me like a glorious discovery. How magnificent Mistral's lines are:

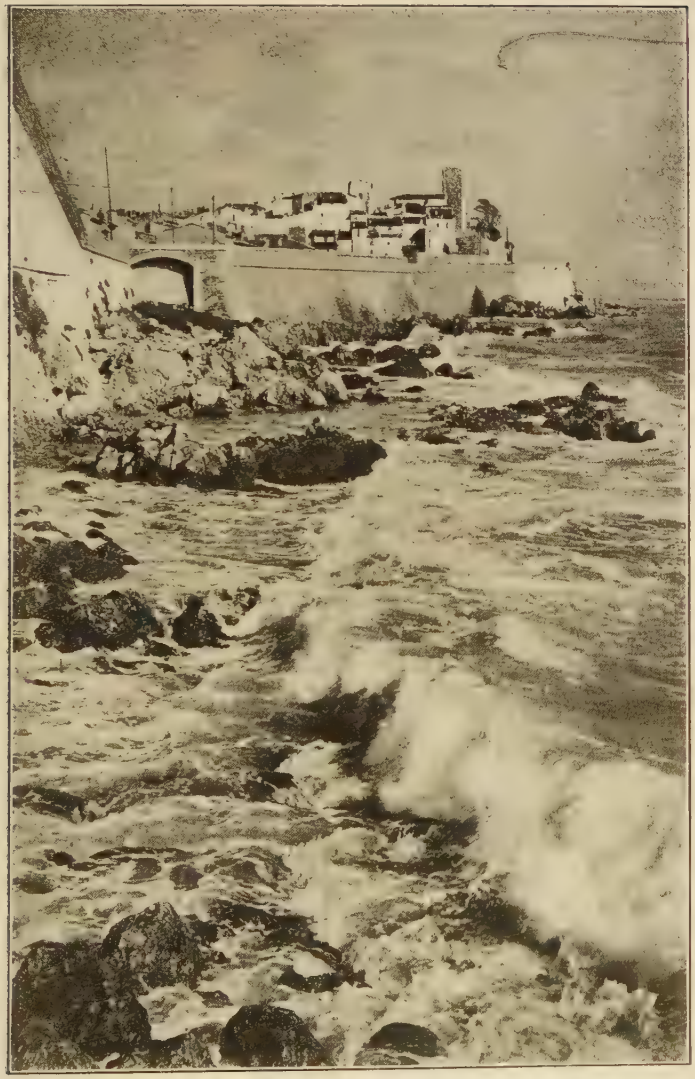
> "That ever-smiling sea, — God poured its flood
> From out His splendour with a lavish hand,
> To bind the brown-hued peoples of thy blood,
> With one unbroken, scintillating band!"

After breakfast we met Miss Mathers, and from her caught the idea that the best *first* experience of Cannes was to be received from the sea and from the Iles de Lérins, which we saw lying, long and low, beyond the confines of the bay. At our persuasion Miss Mathers decided not to go on to Bordighera until another day, and as she declared herself not at all too tired for the little expedition to the islands, we started, the three of us together, soon after nine o'clock for the Port.

Our walk along the sea wall by the Boulevard de la Croisette was delightful. Mont Chevalier, with its fine old church towers, old Cannes clustering at its base, bounding the view to the west. We found a small naphtha launch, with a brown and sturdy skipper, just ready to start for its first trip of the day; in short order we were dancing over the waves towards those long-drawn lines of verdure at a distance out to sea, Les Iles de Lérins.

Miss Mathers pointed out different best known quarters of Cannes which soon lay, a coloured crescent behind us, its encircling green hills dotted with white villas, beyond which rose the splendid mountain ranges of the Maritime Alps. Soon the Point de la Croisette subsided into a tiny spit of land beyond which, east, appeared the deep indentation of the great Gulf of Juan, bounded by the long, curiously shaped Cap d'Antibes. To the west the exquisite violet outlines of the Esterel Mountains framed in Mont Chevalier and the Gulf of Napoule. All the picture lay steeped in glowing gold and azure, while vegetation of luxuriant growth added vivid green to the scheme of colour. The Riviera seemed to be displayed to us in all its component parts, and we declared it surpassingly beautiful. Miss Mathers, however, admitted that she had had to learn to care for it, the complete conquest of this shore by hotel and casino and shop people having robbed it of all the natural, the romantic and suggestive. We realized the truth of this, and the wisdom of gaining first impressions from the sea, rather than from the land.

In half an hour our little boat made its first landing at the Isle of St. Marguerite, which stretched its low green hills far to the right of the rugged old fort, famous for the imprisonment



CAP D'ANTIBES.

there, for eleven years, of "the Man with the Iron Mask." Miss Mathers assured us that the other island, that of St. Honorat, was far better worth a visit, and we accordingly kept our places in the boat, while half a dozen *pelerins* scrambled up to a somewhat dubious quay. During this process we reviewed our knowledge of the old story of the famous prisoner of this island, concerning whom so many and so fascinating romances have been projected. Condensed, the facts may be given as follows:

In the early months of the year 1687, the governor of the fortress and island of St. Marguerite caused a new chapel to be built within the fortifications and various improvements to be made in the residence portion, for the reason that a new governor, the eminent Comte de Saint-Mars, was coming. In April the new governor arrived, with his wife and a considerable retinue. With them came a masked prisoner who was carried by eight servants during the whole journey, in a chair enclosed by a frame over which was stretched a canvas. No person caught sight of the face of this prisoner or heard his voice. He was known locally as *l'homme de Péronne*, or *le prisonnier de Provence*, but the world has known him always and only as the "*Masque de Fer*," made famous thus by Voltaire.

The new governor had his orders that his mysterious prisoner was "to be hardly treated and jealously secluded from every eye, and to be given no comforts whatever." These instructions were faithfully followed until the year 1698, when Saint-Mars was promoted to the governorship of the Bastille. He set out for Paris, the "Mask" travelling with him, and eating at the same table. But beside Saint-Mars' plate a loaded pistol always lay. In the Bastille the still unknown prisoner was locked into the Tour Bertandière. He had now been a prisoner for twenty-five years, having been confined to the political prison of Exilles on the north side of the range of Mont Cenis for thirteen years before his journey to the island of St. Marguerite. His strength began to fail; his youth had fled. He sickened and died in the year 1703. A physician who prescribed for him felt his pulse, but never saw his face. No priest was called to minister to him. His death certificate gave the name of *Marchiely*, plainly not his.

Of the few personalities preserved regarding a man of evident importance and distinction, the following are authenticated: he was tall, well made, and probably not far from thirty years of age when first imprisoned; he spoke French with a foreign accent; was a communicant of the

Church of Rome; was fond of music. The mask, without which he was never seen, was not of iron, but of black velvet, with springs of steel. There was no evidence that he was treated with royal honours.

Who was the man?

Various are the answers. He has been identified, with much or little reason, as the illegitimate son of Louis XIV, as a Bourbon bastard, as the Duke of Monmouth, as an elder brother of Louis XIV, as a son of Cardinal Mazarin and Anne of Austria, as a son of Cromwell, and as a son of the Duke of Buckingham, — even as the father of Napoleon Bonaparte.

These guesses by no means exhaust the list. It is believed in certain quarters that the archives of the Vatican alone hold the secret. The guide books adopt the theory that *Masque de Fer* was an Italian named Mathioli, who sold the secret of a French intrigue concerning the cession of Casale to the enemies of Louis XIV, for whom he was acting as agent. As this man died nine years before the *prisonnier de Provence*, one can only say that the guide books are easily satisfied.

An ingenious but by no means completely proven theory makes this Enigma of French history a certain Monsieur de Marchiel, a bold, accomplished adventurer, who is known to have

participated in a conspiracy to poison Louis XIV. This man was captured at Péronne, on March twenty-ninth, 1673, and his plot was frustrated. He was imprisoned, but for unknown reasons he was not executed, and he appears to have been the subject of inexplicable interest and thought on the part of the authorities for years. His name would coincide fairly with the name under which the Mask was buried.

We threaded the narrow channel of Friuli which separates these " rosettes of the sea," the islands of the Lérins, and now approached the richly wooded banks of St. Honorat. Landing, we rambled for a while under the pine trees by the shore, then turned by a cypress avenue, which traverses the island from north to south, and reached the famous monastery.

We looked with interest at the well kept gardens and substantial buildings, but knew ourselves not admitted. The monks of St. Honorat are no more to be found on their historic site, which is now occupied by a semi-monastic agricultural school. The prevailing effect of the establishment is that of a modern institution.

But the charm of the ancient days is preserved in the small, detached, ruined chapels and in the fine eleventh century chateau, which, built upon a point of land jutting out into the sea to the south

CASTLE OF ST. HONORAT, CANNES.

of the monastery, served "as a beacon, an arsenal and a library." In the year 1107 Moorish pirates landed below the chateau and made fiendish massacre of the pious monks of St. Honorat. Only six out of many hundreds escaped. But these went heroically to work to build up the order anew, and it remained powerful through the Middle Ages.

We found a shady nook on the shore, and sat down for an hour and more, on the grass just opposite the picturesque shell of this ancient monastic stronghold, with a glorious view of the Esterels and the sea beyond. Miss Mathers said the chateau was little worth the effort of a visit, its outer being the more interesting aspect. She called our attention to the antique stones taken from old Roman remains and built into the castle walls. One bears the name of Constantine.

We had brought with us fruit and fresh *brioche*, discovered by me with glee in a shining *patisserie* on our way to the Port; and after we had refreshed ourselves with these, M'sieur entertained us with bits concerning St. Honorat from a very illuminating book on the "Maritime Alps and their Seaboard," by the author of "Vèra."

"Honoratus, the founder of the monastery, was a Gallic convert to Christianity late in the fourth century," thus we were informed. "He

had a sister named Marguerite, and together they travelled the Provençal shore and made a hermitage at Cap Roux, the point north of Beaulieu. The young saint, however, had his eyes on these islands, then called Lero and Lerina, and especially was charmed with the smaller, Lerina. 'The air, he noticed, was balmy, and the thickets were full of odorous and health-giving plants. There were the wild sarsaparilla, the milfoil, that banishes melancholy, the resinous pines, the sleep-giving henbane, and the fennel and the aloe that strengthen the eyesight. This seemed to be the very place for a hermit's home. But it had two great drawbacks. In the first place, Lerina swarmed with poisonous snakes, with brown, barred adders, squirming among the sunburnt stones or hissing from among the lush grasses. In the second place, there was no well or spring. The legend tells us how the saint first summarily disposed of the serpents, and then pondered how to obtain a supply of water, for an intended monastery. Below two tall palm trees he struck the ground three times, in honour of the Trinity, which he invoked, and bade the waters flow. A sparkling and abounding fountain instantly burst forth. The limestone rocks often contain such springs, the outcome of a subterranean deposit of fresh water, and to this day St. Honorat's well con-

tinues to supply the island and the monastery called of the Lérins. Honoratus proceeded to settle on this enchanted spot.' This was about the year 410. Marguerite was banished to Lero, thenceforth named for her; the first rule of the monastery being (it appears also to be the last!) that no foot of woman should pass its threshold. Soon the order grew strong and powerful.

"Cannes itself was nothing for centuries but a fief of the Abbots of the Lérins, to whom the Cannois paid heavy taxes. This monastery became to Gaul what Monte Cassino was to Italy through the Middle Ages: a seedbed of saints and missionaries, bishops and priors. Its Abbot at one time ruled over thirty-seven hundred monks. St. Honorat, founder of all this, was called from his convent to the see of Arles. There he died at the Epiphany, in the year 427, leaving a church 'which he had quickened to a deeper and richer life.' Among the missionaries trained on this island it is most interesting to find the name of Ireland's great apostle, St. Patrick. The traditions of the clearing out of Ireland of all venomous snakes by Patrick seems to be borrowed from the miracle of St. Honorat. (Question: Is Erin's Isle a derivative of Lérin's Isle?)

"A bull of Pius VI in 1787 united the abbacy

of the Lérins to the see of Grasse, the monastery having declined rapidly in numbers and in prestige after the Reformation; when the pontifical commissioner came to look into the affairs of the house he found there were but four monks in residence on St. Honorat. The seven chapels had lost their popularity and pilgrims no longer flocked to their shrines; only the plant of pardon, *cineraria maritima*, still showed its spikes of yellow flowers on the beach where martyrs had died under the blows of the Moorish pirates. The moment had come for the secularization of St. Honorat. The treasures of the convent have been scattered; some remnants are still preserved in Grasse and in Cannes; these, with a small, annual procession of white-veiled children in Cannes, are the sole reminders on these shores of the good St. Honorat, beyond the islands."

"I must read one paragraph directly from this very clever author," now added M'sieur, observing that we were making as if to gather up our possessions; "then we shall still have time to look a little at the ruins of the chapels as we go to the boat. 'It is hardly possible,'" he read on, "'to exaggerate the importance of French monasticism during those early centuries. It was the monks who rendered Christian a new world reclaimed from utter barbarism; it was the monks

who taught the Gospel, who preserved the vestiges of classical learning. They were the priests, the chroniclers, the gardeners, the doctors, the schoolmasters, and, above all, the missionaries of Europe!' "

With this tribute we rose to depart from the lovely isolation of St. Honorat.

Late in the afternoon Miss Mathers and I met in the balcony of her beautiful room, M'sieur having left to climb to the heights of Mont Chevalier. Over the tea cups we had an hour of intimate, cordial converse, in which I found myself drawn to my new friend more than ever. She is to be the guest in Bordighera of some wealthy cousins who have lived in a villa there for months; and there is to take place, in the latter part of this month, the marriage of her sister.

Gathering that some unusual adventure had given peculiar romance and interest to this marriage, I entreated Miss Mathers to tell me the whole story.

" No, I cannot do that," she replied; " I could not do it justice. But I will promise you to do something better, if I can. My sister kept a record, a year ago, of all our experiences when we came to this part of the world, and I assure you it is quite a story. When I see her in Bordighera

I will tell her of how especially *simpatica* you are, beg her to let me have her note-book and send it to you to read. She will probably wish to cut out a few of the most intimate 'passages,' but I really think she will consent. You and M'sieur can read it together, if you like, and then return it to me at Bordighera."

This very pleasing arrangement was made thus provisionally. It was our plan on leaving Cannes to visit Nice, Beaulieu, Mentone, etc., returning to Cannes, to the Hotel Gonnet, in something less than a week. If Miss Mathers' sister consented we should find the manuscript awaiting us on our return.

On the following morning our American friend left us, and M'sieur and I devoted ourselves for another day to Cannes, which we found distinctly expensive, aristocratic, anglicized and yet withal attractive. Its growth into a fashionable watering place dates from the residence of Lord Brougham, who built the Villa Eléanore here in 1834 and who is buried in the cemetery. In 1815 the place consisted of a few dark streets clustering around Mont Chevalier, with one humble inn. It was on March first of that year that Napoleon, arriving on the *Inconstant* from Elba, landed here to "test the popularity of his person and of his dynasty in France." To-day Cannes numbers over thirty

thousand inhabitants, and is the most nobly built resort on the Riviera.

We found the shops and streets, the flower markets and the old Port peculiarly fascinating, and were glad, that May afternoon when we left by the train for Nice, to look forward to a return here, for at least one day more.

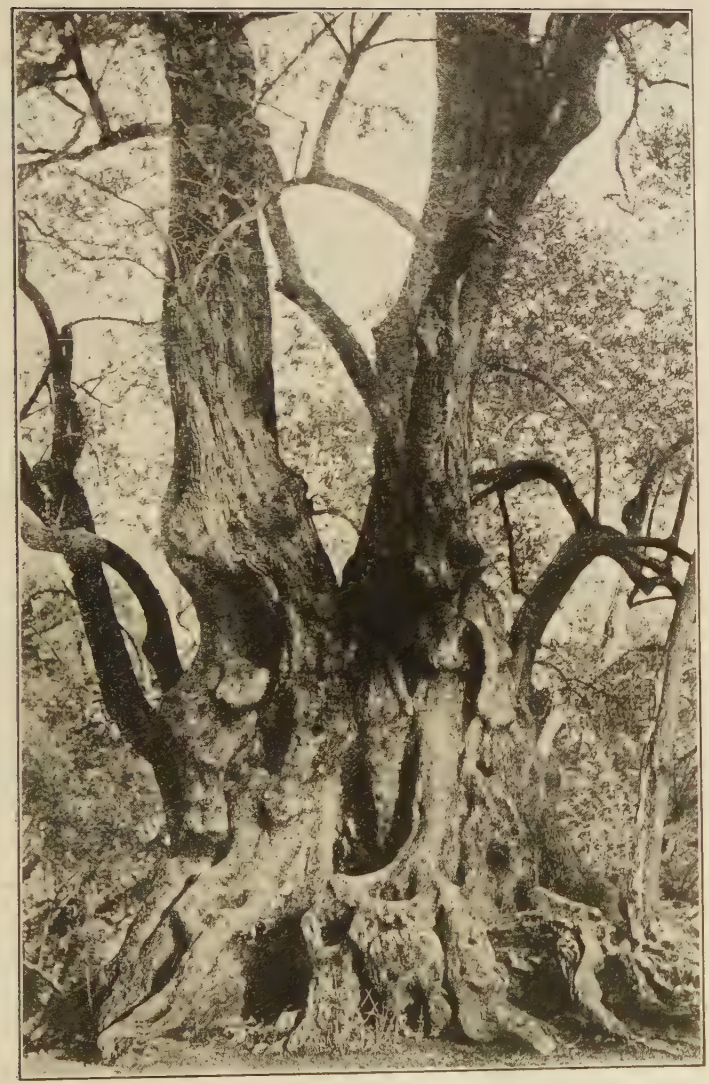
In Nice we found nothing to charm us, not even climate, for heat and dust and wind spoil that at this season. Leaving the sea front which does not compare in beauty with that of Cannes, as the Esterels are now lost to view, we went up to the Pension Barthelémy on a hill above the town. The house is finely arranged and kept, but its glory is its exquisite Italian garden sloping in terraces down the hill, commanding a lovely prospect. If I am ever in Nice again I shall return to this house, because it has all the beauty of situation which belongs to Nice, with nothing of the town itself, which wholly fails to capture my imagination.

Our next tarrying place was Beaulieu, where we were made extremely comfortable in a trim white villa-pension, set among many palms and surrounded with beds of roses and hedges of geraniums. Here we remained several days, not, however, because of any surpassing quality in Beaulieu itself, a town as obvious and new to all

appearing as Atlantic City, an endless series, in fact, of hotels and shops, most of them now closed. The charm of Beaulieu was in the powerful headlands rising to the north; its lovely bay set in between the long peninsula of St. Jean and the great bluff of Cap Roux; in its olive groves and its flowers. The little town is clear-toned, fresh and full of colour; the olives are most beautiful and above all else we were delighted with the wealth of flowers, far beyond what we found at any other point of the Riviera.

Over the tall cream-tinted garden walls there poured like cascades, sheets of richest blossoms; purple and crimson of velvety clematis; vivid pink of the ivy geranium; the yellow of mimosa; the endless honey-pale profusion of Banksia roses, and of jasmine. In the garden of our pension grew and blossomed every rose I ever knew and many never before dreamed of. Heliotrope in enormous bushes, sweet peas, marigolds, iris, honeysuckle, — all things which make for intoxication of sense.

But a feature of Beaulieu which appealed to me, even more than the typical well-kept villa gardens, consisted in the many fields we found which had doubtless once been gardens, but had long since been left to run wild. In these, the grass, growing deep around occasional gnarled



KING OLIVE OF BEAULIEU.

and mighty olives, would be thick sown with yellow or pink roses, blossoming as freely as buttercups; there would be sheets of white marguerites, and a tangle, in any corner, of mimosas and orange and lemon shrubs. Rose geranium grew like a wayside weed, and here and there a purple iris would lift its queenly head, strayed off alone through the grass.

On our last evening in Beaulieu a crescent moon hung like silver in the western sky, with the evening star below it. The broad, glossy leaves of the palm trees caught rays like spilled silver, and in their shadows the creamy and crimson and golden roses shed opulent and heedless petals on the dewy grass. The wind had sunk to rest; the air was laden with fragrance and of indescribable softness. In an old olive orchard above the garden, nightingales sang. We owned the Riviera's charm.

Morning came. The sun shone from a crystal sea of a wholly new, an incredible blue; not sapphire nor turquoise, not sky blue, nor sea blue, but the blue of a blue-eyed baby's eyes. I lost my heart that day to the passionate colour of these shores. The whispering pines of Cap St. Jean stood out to the west through soft crimson haze. The morning air was vital, pure and energizing. From every wall, and every cranny in

every wall, poured out the lavish abundance of flowers, all rejoicing in this crystalline, *riante* atmosphere; the atmosphere without mystery, without shadow, which belongs to the Côte d'Azur.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GRANDE - CORNICHE

THE Riviera possesses three roads known as *Corniche* (the English equivalent being cornice with the Italian *Cornice* as pronunciation). First, if one begins at the west, is the *Corniche d'Or*, or Golden Corniche, which, completed only in 1903, skirts the Esterels from St. Raphaël to La Napoule. Second, the *Petite-Corniche*, the coast road for trams and vehicles from Nice to Mentone, completed in 1881. The spoliation of the beauty of this road is thus well described by Gordon Home: "On the lower *Corniche* road, since the motor car made its appearance, the pale yellow powder that lies on the road to the depth of half an inch, is seldom at rest for more than a few moments. Flowers, shrubs, trees, walls, rocks and everything near the road is turned to a pale biscuit colour by this miller's grist." The third, and most famous of these routes is that of the *Grande-Corniche*, which also leads from Nice to Mentone; but

which is built along the shoulders of the mountains at a distance of several miles back from the coast-line. This road was constructed under Napoleon Bonaparte in the year 1805, following the track laid out over the lower ranges of the Maritime Alps by the Romans.

It was at two o'clock of the afternoon of May the twenty-first that we left Beaulieu and started to drive by the third and noblest of these roads to Mentone. We had a roomy and luxuriously comfortable carriage, with a fine pair of horses, selected by M'sieur in the Place of Beaulieu, and hired for a moderate price, considering the nature of the journey. Luggage we had none, save a small satchel containing all that was needed for a night; all besides we had expedited back to Cannes, which we had made in a sense our head-quarters on the Riviera, our preference for it increasing the more we saw of other resorts.

The sun was warm and at first we kept the *capote* raised, a barrier to our freedom of vision, but after an hour this was no longer required. The sky was glorious with refulgent white clouds, and the sea so clear that from the greatest heights which the road attained we could distinguish the colours of the seaweeds and sands in the bottom of the shoal water. The air was as clear as crystal and without the *mistral* which the day before had

blown the books from our tables and the pictures from our walls at the Beaulieu *pension*. Altogether the day was as if ordered for this long-anticipated journey.

First was to attain to the *Grande-Corniche* from Beaulieu, a process utterly enchanting and consuming about an hour. For we had to climb to the level of those awful cliffs, which beetle, stern and jagged, over the sunny, simple flower-bedecked little town. The road ascended in endless zigzags, giving, first, views of the Bay of Beaulieu, and then the Bay of Villefranche; first, St. Jean's pine-clad peninsula, then Montboron and glimpses of Nice beyond. And always there lay the limitless stretch of the sea. So much for the distance. For the near, we delighted in the charming villas of Beaulieu's higher terraces, unvisited before, their gardens fairly foaming over the walls with profusion of vivid bloom.

These luxurious but bourgeois villas of Beaulieu gave way presently to a long stretch of high cream-white plaster walls, shutting in, we learned, the magnificent estate of that bad old Belgian king who of late left this world for this world's good. Hints of the luxurious beauty within were given by stately palm trees and tall roses showing above the wall, and by a glimpse through sealed iron gates of a stately avenue of approach to the

royal pleasure house. Passing on and up, we came next into a region of noble pines and olives; the former, with their deep, massive gloom, throwing the silvery lightness of the latter into charming relief. The olive trees of this part of Provence equal those of Tivoli in imposing beauty, and an added charm is given by the rich greenness of the grass which clothes the ground of the orchards, closely sprinkled with wild-flowers, like a Botticelli foreground.

And still we climbed, and ever climbed, and still the *Grande-Corniche* was unattained; almost, I began to think, unattainable.

Then, suddenly, a sound of martial music smote our ears. The road came out on a mountain-ridge, unscreened at this point by trees, and across a ravine, along an opposite height, we saw a detachment of infantry marching rapidly, but in strict military order, to the stirring sound of fife and drum. The road on which the soldiers were marching west towards Nice was the *Grande-Corniche*. It seemed strangely fit that our first sight of Bonaparte's celebrated military high-road should be announced to us by the sound of military music and the passing of soldiers of France.

We had reached the *Col des Quatres Chemins*, and our winding and climbing alike had ceased.

For the first time our horses could trot, and trot they did, straight towards the east, over a road as white as chalk, as hard as iron, and as smooth as a ballroom floor. Gone now were olives and pines, save for a chance straggler; gone the gardens and garden flowers. We had reached, at last, the level of those black, towering crags, to which we had been wont to raise awed eyes from pretty little Beaulieu; we were on grey, stony, sterile mountain sides, where only heather, wild convolvulus and the bushy cistus offer their pale, sparse bloom. This was foreground. But beyond? There was the thrill of revelation as the magnificent coast line far westward swept before our eyes, the *cocher* stopping his horses that they might rest and that we might gaze. Beaulieu, Villefranche, Nice, all seemed immediately beneath us, while beyond stretched the Cap d'Antibes, and the delicate profile of the Esterels. Around the green capes, all gay with chateaux and villas, lay the sea, embracing them with its bays and small, land-locked harbours; and the horizon line, at that one supernal moment, was banded with rosy and purple mist, like a straightened-out rainbow, I was bold to say, used as a measuring line for sky and sea, in the hand of a god.

Never have I seen so glorious a sweep of coast

from such an altitude. Breathless with delight, we went on from glory to glory, for next was a grand curve of the road inland, disclosing northward vast, tumbled ranges of the Alps, rich in violet glooms, billowy clouds leaning over them. Then, another turn and the most dramatic surprise of the entire journey was encountered. Between two desolate whitened headlands rose the quite incredible rock and rock-built village of Eze, its tall white church tower rising like an exclamation point in the landscape. All the world agrees that Eze is the "most picturesque thing on the coast," but all the world in vain attempts to describe it. A part of the isolated perpendicular crag on which its deserted mediaeval houses, its ruined castle are built, Eze stands gaunt, age-worn, looking from its coign of vantage, between stark, desert mountain walls, straight out to sea. It seemed to me like a thing dead and waiting for burial, yet sternly beautiful and commanding in its death.

At this point, familiar adjectives having lost their value, M'sieur introduced *übermenschliche*, which seemed to relieve our minds, although I still clung myself to "dramatic."

Again we caught the Napoleonic militant touch that belongs to this colossal war-trail, for the high peaks beyond Eze, the Tête du Chien and

EZE.

Mont Agel, were grimly fortified. Again we caught the sound of martial music, and a small troop of soldiers, bugling lustily, marched rapidly past us. All at once, we found ourselves entering a village street, and were told that it was La Turbie, where it was quite in order to stop for a quarter of an hour for rest and tea.

We found an open-hearted, if not over tidy café, and while we indulgently tolerated and even swallowed the tea and the inevitable and always crisp *croissants*, we watched what went on just outside the window. At a small table two officers had ordered a glass of wine; two more joined their company, then other four, and " more and more and more." The group became a circle, and a gay one by reason of the uniforms, brilliant with scarlet facings and much gold braid. Despite the heat, the officers seemed in no way incommoded by their trappings of war; they were well set-up, well groomed, well-satisfied, and seemed to make the best of such feeble show of a boulevard café as La Turbie could offer. However, their resources are not confined to the mountain military settlement. A funicular railroad connects La Turbie with Monte Carlo, two miles below.

Driving on east from La Turbie, a new unfold-

ing of the panorama greeted our eyes. Majestic in line, in curve and in elevation, the shore now seemed richly peopled; built up almost continuously with dazzling white temples, or so they appeared from our distant point of view. Down upon these towers and pinnacles of gleaming white, between purple mountains, through a silvery mist, slanted long rays of light from the sinking sun, clothing them with an almost unearthly radiance. The picture was a perfect Turner, magically touched, stately, superb, steeped in Turner's own effulgent golden haze. That those shining temples were in reality the Palace and Museum of Monaco, the Casino and Hotel of Monte Carlo seemed of little importance. To our perception they were essentially noble, and the shore of such stuff as dreams are made of. We could not, from this height, see in them the sordid, meretricious reality, the shrines of avarice and lust of evil gain, or shelters for fevered and debauched human souls.

Determined to keep intact this spiritualized vision, we decided on the spot not to see Monte Carlo and Monaco at closer range.

Leaving these " cloud-capp'd towers and gorgeous palaces " behind, our next turn of the road brought us within the pleasant ranges of sweetly-fashioned, rose-wreathed villas, at the down slo-

ping of the road past the village of Roquebrune. That we neared Italy was indicated in the double naming which we now encountered; for this charming town is far more familiar under its Italian name, *Roccabruna.*

Here, at last, was a place to build one's nest in and gladly to abide; for Roccabruna overlooks the whole coast line from Cap Martin to Cap Ferrat, and yet there is left behind the stern and awful grandeur of the *Grande-Corniche*, for suddenly all grows soft and smiling, human and possible. M'sieur and I discover that we love these Riviera villas, with their pure white or cream-tinted walls, and their gaily painted friezes of poppies, roses, marguerites. For ornamental tiling and balustrades, turquoise blue is the chosen colour, for shutters also, and we realize that it is from the sea that they catch their colour scheme and from the flowers, these dwellers on the Mediterranean shore. How stupid it would be, in this super-brilliant air, amid this vivid luxuriance of all nature, to run to our cold greys, heavy greens and browns in their house walls!

From Roccabruna the descent was swift into Mentone. Almost before we were aware we had exchanged the rigours of the mountain road for the small gaieties of confectioners' shops, milliners' windows and the elegant disclosures and re-

serves of well ordered hotels. In one of these, it seemed to make little difference which, so it faced the sea and had a garden and balconies, we entered soon after six o'clock and found lodgment for the night. The drive had occupied just four hours.

There is little to record of our sojourn in Mentone; half a day sufficed for it at this *fin de saison*. Furthermore, we were ready now to turn back and leave the shore for a visit to Grasse, which we proposed to make by way of Cannes. Mentone is constructed by the regular formula of all Riviera towns; knowing one, you know all. There are observable here, however, in various ways, suggestions of Italy; things picturesque in the incommunicable Italian fashion. We drove out to Garavan, where are the fine *Rochers Rouges*, and where the breakwater and the harbour with the boats have the air of existing for purposes of their own, not as adjuncts of a fashionable resort. Mentone has no particular historical background but it has a noble physical background of mountain *massif;* it has a profusion of great eucalyptus trees and of lemon groves and frequently assures you that you are next door to Italy.

In the public square of Mentone stands a piece of symbolic sculpture: — a stately, beautiful woman drawing to her a young maiden in a mater-

NEAR MENTONE.

nal embrace of welcome. The representation is of France receiving Mentone in 1860, on the occasion of her withdrawal from fusion with the tiny kingdom of Monaco (still outstanding as an independent principality) and her union with France. All along this superb and sunlit shore I felt a vague pathos in the sense of another land, bereft and uncomforted, still mourning for her children torn from her. But some distant day may yet see a statue in street or square of Nice, showing Italia welcoming back to *her* bosom the child, a generation ago sold from her, as the price of her liberation and unification.

At Mentone we took a first class carriage for Nice, and were alone, until a very elegant dame of fifty years, of comfortable proportions, in mourning most correct and *soignée* entered. Every border was deep with crepe; perfectly fitting, long-armed gloves covered finely rounded hands and wrists; bonnet and veil were fashionable but not pronounced; a slight touch of jet here and there enlivened the gloom; a severely plain but expensive black leather portmonnaie hung from one wrist.

We sat in our corners and she in hers, looking the picture of what a widow-of-the-world should be, dignified, correct, sure of herself. Presently, to our great surprise, Madame broke in upon our

desultory talk with a remark of an informatory character in very fair English.

"Oh, yes," she explained, "I know every bit of this line well, for I come every day to Monte Carlo. You will see a magnificent clematis on a villa here to the right, in a moment."

The clematis seen and passed, Madame again alluded with some *empressement* to the fact that she lived in Mentone but came every day to Monte Carlo.

"I play a little, of course, each day," she continued; "but only a little. I never lose."

With some small encouragement on our part Madame continued, being of the kind, it seemed, who must have an audience.

"I used to think always, Oh if I could but have money to play all I wish! I desired very much to play for higher stakes, and thought I should like nothing so much. I take always the same, you see, a little, — merely two hundred francs, — with me. But then this happened: my husband, he was far away in business in America, and he died there, four months ago. The insurance it has been paid to me. Now I have more, — I can play for more if I like. But no, I cannot do that. The desire is not to play with that money, so coming from him. Do you see, Madame? Does Monsieur understand?"

Yes, we perceived the impressive delicacy of feeling! And still — it had been but four months. The next border of crepe will be narrower.

On from Nice where we left the train to do an errand, we continued the journey to Cannes second class. Again, one single woman entered our carriage and sat in her corner; a woman who was a widow also, we thought, a woman of a humbler class than that of our friend of Monte Carlo. She wore a neat black cotton dress with white dots, and a plain black straw hat. Her ungloved hands were firm and capable, cleanly brown. Her arms were full of bundles of many sorts and descriptions. Like the first traveller, she was going only to the next station. Evidently she had been to Nice on a shopping expedition for her family and her whole heart and thought were concentrated on her anxious and conscientious little purchases. There were children in her keeping; that was plain to see from the bundles, — little shoes and such small matters.

Laying her netted bag of commodities on the seat before her, absorbed and in complete indifference to our presence, the woman opened a bundle and studied it carefully, with a certain motherly tenderness of interest. It was a few metres of striped gingham, enough for some little

maid a dress, or some lad a shirt. It seemed to have been the thing in which her interest, her expedition, centred. While she studied her purchases I studied her face, a strong, good face, deeply lined with care, but full of sense and kindliness and honesty. Above all, of patience.

The station was quickly called. The bundle was rolled together, and the woman sprang up to leave, apparently then first noting our presence. She smiled and bade us a courteous *bon jour*, then gathered her possessions together and disappeared, — the widow indeed, the mother, the woman of the people, the hope of the French Republic, as the other, the woman of luxury and self-indulgence, is its menace.

We reached our comfortable hotel in Cannes just in time to make ready for dinner. At the table there was handed me a little packet, postmarked Bordighera, which I made haste to open.

"Here is what I hoped to find!" I exclaimed; "you remember that Miss Kate Mathers promised, if she could, to send me her sister's notebook of a year ago, when they were having interesting experiences in this part of Provence? This sister is about to be married and this book, I know, gives her love story."

M'sieur looked over my shoulder into the closely written pages.

"'*La Rose du Mai!*'" he exclaimed. "That certainly sounds interesting. Why not devote this evening to reading it, since to-morrow we must move on to Grasse?"

"Why not, indeed?"

CHAPTER IX

LA ROSE DU MAI

Being the History of an American Girl's Sketching Ramble in the French Alps

NICE, April 29, 19—.

MY first impression of France is that nothing was ever so sudden. No outrider islands, as in the approach to Naples, signal what awaits you. We landed in Villefranche yesterday at two o'clock, coming from Palermo on the *Kronprinzessin*. The morning had been cloudy but without fog. Word was passed around that we would be landed soon after one. I took the liberty to disbelieve this, as the dull, grey stretch of sea and sky up to eleven offered no faintest suggestion of land. Yes, about ten one solitary gull flapped broad wings over our masthead; but one gull! — we were accustomed to ports which sent out these heralds, by the hundred, two days ahead of our arrival, to beckon us forward. Also there was one sail in the offing; elsewhere nothing to be-

token that any but ourselves had ever sailed this grey and sullen sea.

My faith in the shore of France dead ahead was not even as a grain of mustard seed, but the ship's officers seemed to have faith of a tree's stature, for lunch was served at eleven o'clock, and truly, before coffee was reached, the cry came, "Land in sight!" Of course we rushed to the nearest portholes and peered through with liveliest curiosity to catch a first glimpse of the far famed Riviera. We were entering a small and sinuous bay encircled by sandy capes, here and there clothed with pines. Among the trees, towers and roofs, as of villas and castles, could be seen. Just ahead of the ship's bow, incredibly near, climbing a cliff immediately from the water's edge, so that our masts seemed likely to touch the chimneys, were houses, yellow-walled and red-roofed. Villefranche! We could no longer maintain incredulity, but we could insist that never was town so sudden. At that instant the ship screamed at the top of her very shrill voice, that she had arrived, and her anchors splashed with emphasis into the water, only a few rods of which intervened between her and the red-roofed houses.

Plainly the moment for veils and the exchange of visiting cards had come. But we scarcely had time for these before a fleet of small boats

swarming around the foot of our landing-stair indicated that the *Kronprinzessin* was ready to see us depart without further ceremony.

Twenty minutes later Kate and I stood on the tiny quay of Villefranche and for the first time faced the French customs. All sorts of people were urging us onward to a small shed of a building into which we even then saw our luggage conveyed. We looked at each other, a little perturbed. I think we had fancied arrival in France quite other than this; had expected a gradual acquaintance with all things French coming to restore to us early memories of Chardenal's vocabularies, so carefully memorized, and of the nice constructions of Æsop's fables. These did not seem just now to come back, or if recalled, to serve our turn. I did rapidly rehearse in my mind the circumstance that a villager found *sous une haie un serpent presque mort du froid,* and that *un ane ait l'impertinence de suivre un sanglier,* but neither of these incidents seemed to furnish me with words with which to explain that we did not carry any *tabaque* or *liqueurs* in our trunk, to the gruff looking official before whom we now stood. Fortunately, he was less gruff than he appeared; recognized us at once as non-law-breakers, and chalked our various pieces of luggage with the celerity of lightning.

Turning again to the landing stage, we found ourselves surrounded by a circle of nondescript residents of Villefranche, who appeared to have adopted us, out of compassion or for some less noble motive. To them we conveyed with little difficulty the thought that we wished all our luggage and both ourselves piled into a carriage and driven to the Pension de Londres in Nice, and that for this service we were not willing to pay much more than the legal tariff. Five minutes more, and we were rattling up the steep street of Villefranche, with all our belongings neatly stowed away in a roomy calèche, and started on the dusty drive of two miles to Nice.

Neither Kate nor I, to tell the truth, knew precisely why we had chosen Nice; it seems perhaps the most obvious stopping place on the Riviera, but of the Riviera itself we knew nothing beyond those stock items which one always hears from Americans. Palms and roses; turquoise seas; royal villas; delicious gardens; something eccentric in principalities at Monaco; gay iniquities at Monte Carlo — this, perhaps, would cover our knowledge and our expectation yesterday morning.

The trouble with us is that we did not want to come to France at all, and that our hearts were left behind in Taormina. We have been steeping

our minds and our imaginations too long in the atmosphere of Sicily. Its climate, its sky, its haunting memories, its names to conjure by, its wild flowers, — the asphodel, the cyclamen, the anemone, the almond blossom, have made up for us a poem, a dream of penetrating enchantment. And everything there suggested a picture. My trade throve apace. Why did it grow too warm for me to work? And why did Gabe and Gabrielle need to get excited over our nice little *terremoto*, which Kate and I found only amusing? After they cabled from — I've forgotten where, some unheard of recherché island, — "*You absolutely must leave Sicily. Cable at once,*" — there seemed nothing to do but reply, obediently, "*We will,*" like good little girls.

Why these, our cousins, should dictate our movements, I do not, cannot grasp. Kate insists that it is "perfectly dear" of them to feel so responsible for us, and that it would always give one of us something to tie to if anything went wrong with the other; that it *is* a comfort to know they care, and all that. When Kate says these things, looking like a little seraph just about to soar away from me up into the blue, of course I howl inwardly and yield everything — everything but to travel on their yacht and in or by their automobiles. Thank Fortune, Kate is as

little for that as I! Truly I can think of nothing worse than, day after day, day after day, to stick, nor breath nor motion, on some classic sea with Gabe rapturously droning Homer in my ear, or to whizz through the kingdoms of the earth under the lee of Gabrielle's latest automobile bonnet and gold-mounted dressing cases. Angels and ministers of grace defend us! Does anybody dream how much happier my Katie and I are in our eight franc *pensions* and our second-class travelling carriages, with our now-and-then treats of landau journeys, and our gay little afternoon teas with the wickedest cakies we can find at fifteen centesimi each? Such fun we have, such utter glee!

But to begin again: all that is beside the mark. Since I have determined to record the doings and beings of this whole journey and have done it faithfully in Taormina those heavenly six weeks, because I was so happy, I am bound to continue the same now that the untimely chill of the French Riviera has visited my damask (*née* freckled) cheek, all too roughly. Matthew Arnold to the rescue; — may not

> "Tasks in hours of insight willed
> In hours of gloom be fulfilled?"

Two feet, — or inches, — short on that last line, by reason of trying to weave in a quotation

with easy elegance! It doesn't work. You've got to take them straight and proper, quotation marks at end and beginning in order due.

We troubled ourselves very little about Nice last night, being glad enough to get ourselves and seven pieces of luggage to the pale, up-shuttered, hard-on-the-street Pension de Londres. After doing our devoir fretfully by the inevitable *salade et poulet*, the caramel custard and the austere and tasteless French oranges, by way of festive wind-up, glad enough were we to retreat to our room and let the Riviera wait.

So it was not until morning that full disenchantment came; say rather, sprang — sprang full statured in an hour. (That quotation goes rather better.) The sky was clear, to be sure, but it is a brittle sky which we find here, and a hard, making one think of glass, as Italy's sky in its softness recalls the texture of velvet. Of course it may as well be admitted at once that anything short of the Heavenly City itself would be disappointing after Taormina. Nice is not wholly to blame for not including Etna in its *ditorno*. I do not think it even professes to. But to profess to have every other glory and beauty of a glorious shore; to be pictured as running over with flowers, vines, trees the most luxuriant, with cliffs and headlands wildly picturesque, and

then to turn out what we found this morning on our tram-ride and walk of orientation, — that is palpably unfair. What we found Nice is as follows: a Thames embankment with rows of palm trees along the water-front and dusty beds of roses and geraniums. Its " luxuriant profusion " is not of flowers but of advertisements, plastering endless house fronts, under-studies to some *bourgeois* quarter of Paris. Its Montboron and Cimiez are tame; its Paillon is a stony track and dry of an absentee river. Hotels line every avenue, miles of them, all with gates and doors locked, all with upper windows open and gushing forth with mattresses and blankets and red duvets. *On* cleans house on the Riviera at present.

We have had the privilege of looking into the prim hotel gardens through iron gratings; we have gazed at the hard gravel paths between palm trees and threaded yuccas, with here and there disconsolate white iris curling up its toes with discouragement, and our hearts curled up within us of homesickness. In our *pension* we are alone, save for a few Russians who, though they linger, constantly reiterate, " It is time to go! It is time to go! " We perfectly agree.

" Oh, Italy, Italy," we have cried to each other, " thou who hast the fatal gift of beauty! " Fatal

indeed it proves to those who would turn from it to find a new enthusiasm for another land!

With lagging step, and flagging spirit, which we sought to disguise under a show of sight-seeing interest, we turned to our Baedeker, and found a star indicating distinction for the Promenade des Anglais. Following the star, we found a boulevard hard and white and very broad, beyond which lay the Mediterranean, very blue. Above both the sky was white; a blinding sun shone through a blinding wind on the blinding white of the pavement. Also there shone out a big and bulging Casino with much gilding, described, I think, as "palatial," and there were many benches and few to use them. We met sundry idle Niçois strolling as aimlessly as ourselves, who stared at us with scarcely concealed diversion in our obvious innocence in attacking Nice in May. There were these and there flickered past us, now and then, certain ladies of the nether world, left stranded, I suppose, on this shore, in startling sheath gowns, with evil lips and eyes, who made all womanhood, for one little moment, seem too bitter to be borne.

I saw Kate glance about her for a resting-place. She was limping badly and looked hurt through and through. I searched in the dust and glare for sight of a cab and half a dozen *cochers,* with

waving whips, were instantly upon us. With precision I chose, as I always do when I am tired, the man with the worst horse, and we rattled back by avenues *de la Gare* of Victor Hugo, Gambetta and All French Saints, to our *pension*. I longed for dear old Cavour and Umberto Primo.

When I had achieved hot milk for Kate and a large currant bun for myself and we liked ourselves better, she exclaimed:

"What in the world is there to paint here, Rose?"

"Except our faces, I see nothing," I replied. "What have we come to Nice for, anyway? Why couldn't the Angels Gabriel have left us alone in darling Taormina?"

"Don't go back to that," Kate remonstrated. "There is no use in sulking at them when you know perfectly well that the heat was growing unendurable."

"But at least there was not this blithering *mistral* to torment us there."

"Do you prefer scirocco?"

"Perhaps I do, but *ce n'importe*. Sicily is below our horizon now, and work I must and will. But where? and at what? This whole shore seems to be one endless esplanade. Am I to do Casinos and shop-fronts hereafter?"

"Yes, I think so," murmured Kate vaguely,

her fingers fluttering fast the leaves of her Baedeker, her neat little eyebrows knit with resolve. "Don't speak now. I am finding something."

Gorge du Loup, May —.

"*Where in the world are you? Wire Athens.*"

This was the despatch handed us just as we left Nice. It had been bandied about through the two Sicilies, to London and to Paris, and appeared quite tired. It tired us to receive it. The moment was unsuited to accurate advices. We sent reply to Athens: "*Don't know. Somewhere north of Nice.*"

'Tis all we know ourselves and all they need to know.

When I registered my last impression of this expedition Kate was fluttering the leaves of the Baedeker. Suddenly she cried, "Rose, there is a Hinterland!" Exclamations like these followed, falling fast around me:

"Interesting mountain district." "*Ligne du Sud* from Nice to Grasse." "Narrow gauge railway traversing seventeen viaducts — "

"Fascinating!" I broke in, I remember.

"Why? Precisely what is a viaduct?"

"A passage, elevated for some reason above the ordinary level, for the conduct of a road, a *via*, my child, even as an aqueduct, conducts aqua.

"THERE IS A HINTERLAND."

Is it clear? It is fascinating because it implies ravines, gorges, mountain torrents and the like. Seventeen *must* mean scenery.

" I see. Yes, here is one described as lofty and curved."

My head was over the book now.

" Also nine tunnels," added Kate, " and a double-tier bridge. Then there seem to be various *Baous*, whatever they are, ruined castles of the old Knights Templars, ancient fortifications, tenth century churches, all sorts of things perched on crags, — "

" Say no more," I cried. " Enough for me! If things like these exist in Provence I shall yet love Provence in spite of Nice. And Nice is not Provence, anyway. Good or bad, it is really Italy. Read up all you can about this *Ligne du Sud* while I pack."

What followed was that yesterday we boarded a morning train at Nice, with tickets bought for the hill-town of Grasse, thirty miles distant. Of Grasse we discovered nothing save that it " is growing in favour as a winter resort for invalids; " that palms and other tropical plants flourish there and that many essences and that kind of thing are manufactured. All these things seemed negligible; we did not consider them especially alluring and, in fact, entertained important doubts as

to really reaching Grasse at all, having our faith shaken in "resorts" of all kinds. We were setting forth to seek our fortune; we were on the high Quest of Beauty. Nature we would find if there was any nature left un-embanked, or, to use an expression of an American I know, — not "parked up." If we found what we wanted short of Grasse, with traces of an *Auberge*, how mediaeval or humble soever, we were prepared to grasp our belongings hastily and plunge.

And this is exactly what we did. An excellent woman with a large basket of cauliflowers and bunches of *asperges*, topped by a great bouquet of roses and marguerites, took an interest in us, on the train, and guided our uncertain steps to this spot. She was a most engaging *paysanne*, and made my heart warm to France of a sudden, in a perfectly inconsequent fashion. Her face was wrinkled and rosy and brown, with such good eyes, small and green and full of sunlight; she wore a tidy white-frilled cap and over it a wide black straw hat, tied under her chin with black ribbons. Everything about her was tidy, and self-respecting, but utterly lacking in the suave sweetness and gentle humility of the Italian woman of her class. For the first time, when speaking with this woman, I remembered, — also I realized, — that France is a Republic.

But I have gone on too fast and have not said that as we left Nice we suddenly perceived its beauty of sky and sea, bay and hills, villas and gardens. The air, too, is delightful when the *mistral* sleeps. But Nice was quickly forgotten in the wonderful chaos of purple mountains, the Alpes Maritimes, to which we had been all oblivious and blind while caught in the network of Niçois tram lines, shops, hotels and boulevards, and which yet almost overhang the city. At every mile the wonder grew, as we threaded narrow passes, burst out through roaring tunnels into marvellous valleys lorded over by cragged hills, on whose tops, built into the very structure, it seemed, of the rocks, would be ancient towns with towers and battlements, rich umber walls and dull red roofs. Was this Provence? Was this France?

I grew more and more excited every moment, and proposed to descend (that is the word here) at every new station, but my wise sister restrained me. She had no desire to sleep in a ruined castle, or moat or on a city wall, and those precipices terrified her. We must wait until we could learn something of a hotel where it was human and possible for two girls like us to put up in good and regular standing.

At a place called Vence we were on the point

of making a bold dash when the carriage door was barred by the substantial figure of our friend of the cap and hat and basket. Seeing a chance for a possible sketch on the spot, without "descending," I relapsed into my corner. Besides, I saw that Kate had not felt what she could descry of Vence to be convincing. Hence we quieted down after friendly *Bon jours, Madame et Mesdemoiselles,* I murmuring aside to Kate, getting out my block quickly, "Talk to her while I try to get a sketch."

The net result of Kate's talk was on this wise: our friend was herself Vençoise, oh, certainly, — and considered that plainly more illustrious than to be a Parisienne. Vence was *très jolie,* far more so than Nice, but one could also amuse oneself at Nice. Much people frequent Vence in the winter because it is warm; also in the summer because it is cool. There are hotels most comfortable, *très comme il faut.* But also at Le Loup, ah, that is even better — the gorge, the cataract, the hotels *très gentille.* Many English pass through and stop for the trout dinner, in the season, unhappily now over. She would herself descend at Le Loup because was she not carrying her cauliflowers to the Grand Hotel, and the flowers, were they not for her daughter Jeanne, who was *femme de chambre* there and received such good

wages and was treated so well by the *étrangers* always so amiable? The cauliflowers would be reserved, probably, for dinner, but she knew the *asperges* would be in the cook's hands precisely in time for the *déjeuner*. Would the mesdemoiselles wish to descend at Le Loup? to visit the Gorges, to take *déjeuner* at the hotel? Ah, *c'est très bien*. Then she would direct them, would send a man back from the hotel for their *bagage*, all would be *à la bonne heure*.

Both perfectly convinced that we had come, seen, conquered, as every glance from the window revealed glory upon glory of verdant valley and majestic mountain, of hoary towers at dizzy heights and flashing torrents far below us, we yet played with the situation a little for sheer joy in our sense of satisfaction.

But the name — Le Loup! — Surely this had a most unpleasant suggestion! Was the country then so wild that wolves haunted these orchards, coming down, perhaps, through these famous gorges of which she said so much.

"*Oh, non, non, Mademoiselle*," and our nice Goody laughed and shook her comfortable round shoulders. "Wolves there are not and never were in this part of Provence to the knowledge of the oldest inhabitant. You would have to go to the Esterel for wolves and bears. It is the nature

of the river, which gives Le Loup the name. It is now quiet, *douce*, harmless. But wait until another February, after the snow in the mountains melts, and it will run down between the rocks like a wolf upon its prey, and bring death, swift and awful, to man or beast in its reach. It is a cruel river and a treacherous — *voila* Le Loup!"

"*Ecco*, Le Loup!" I echoed, springing to my feet and reaching for the suitcase, the hold-all and the shawl-strap. "Is it enough, Kate? Are you convinced? I am."

Kate's sudden colour and brightened eyes told of vivid conviction. Our Goody, seeing how great an influence she had exerted over the *mesdemoiselles étrangères*, became like Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile. She thrust her broad brimmed hat far out the carriage window to command a porter, with great *empressement*, to hasten and do his best for the distinguished arrival whom her own right hand had gotten for the Hotel de Loup.

A blue-bloused Provençal youth with a broad face and a broader dialect, rambling casually into sight, responded, placed our valises on his head and shoulders, and led the way down a narrow grassy path, under locust and olive trees, descending from the height of the railroad to the bottom of the ravine. For a few turns of the path

we saw nothing of what was before us, or behind. Then, suddenly, we looked up and back, and saw with joy. The viaduct over which we had just passed by the line, rose above us to a dizzy height, its central piers two hundred and fifty feet above the bed of the torrent, its seven arches framing in glimpses of a deeply recessed mountain gorge, whose walls were violet and rosy in the noon light.

But the wonder of the picture was a hoary walled town on the shoulder of the mighty mountain at the right of the gorge, its bastions and battlements the very grey of the crags of which it seemed to form a part.

"What is that wonderful place?" I asked our *garçon* who watched our rising enthusiasm with evident satisfaction.

"*C'est Gourdon, une ville très ancienne. C'est jolie, n'est pas?*"

"Jolie" would not have been my chosen adjective for the bold, stern, even awful aspect of the place. However, we acquiesced and hastened on, convinced now that all we sought was here hard at hand.

A few steps from the point where our path had joined the white highroad, a little white hotel was perched, overhanging the roaring green water of the Loup.

It all seemed perfectly simple, and equally

delightful as we entered the house and crossed a large, clean, inviting dining-room, with many windows. Beyond was a terrace with a glorious view down the gorge. At our side was a friendly and sweet-faced young landlady. *Déjeuner?* Oh, certainly. And *diner?* Gladly. But *pension* for a few weeks, while I sketched and Kate enjoyed the cool mountain air, the rest and quiet and easy walks, ah, Mademoiselle, that was *quelque-chose* different. Madame had not conveniences for city folk; she could not make *les étrangères* comfortable; they were far from market; meat was most difficult to procure; the bread was not white and soft as mesdemoiselles would require. They did not undertake to give *pension*, for they but had two rooms and they were most simply furnished. It would be better for mesdemoiselles to go on to Grasse, or back to Vence, where were large hotels, etc., etc.

Katie coaxed in her own pretty way to see the rooms. Madame looked with a tenderness I could see deepening in her eyes at her lovely face, and saw that she was lame and not strong. Plainly her heart warmed; she found her irresistible. We were brought up-stairs in short order, and shown this wide, low, pleasant room, facing up the gorge, under the mighty viaduct. There were two beds, snowy white, there were electric

lamps, persiennes at the windows; the usual cool, red-tiled floor; there were in fact all the ordinary conveniences of life. We liked the room; we wanted to live in it.

Madame seemed complimented by our satisfaction. She admitted that she could give us eggs and milk and vegetables, all fresh and plenty, and her cook was a master hand at soufflés and such. Cherries were ripe, the wild strawberries beginning. If we thought we could put up with their simple fare — yes, we thought we could. *Voila!* — we could remain then while it pleased us. Another moment, and our blue-blouse deposited all our possessions on the floor and left with so many coppers in his hand that his joy was unconfined. Next, ten minutes later, a *garçon* most *comme il faut* in dress suit and white napkin (whom we were sure we had seen in overalls washing windows when we approached the house) knocked at our door to bring us a handful of flowers. They were roses and marguerites which Madame, the mother of the housemaid, begged us to accept as a souvenir of the journey from Nice to Le Loup. Also he wished to announce *déjeuner* in just half an hour, if it suited us.

There would be time sufficient to cook the *asperges!* It suited us admirably.

Gorge du Loup, May 6, —.

This day has been *merveilleux!* Already I am yielding to the insidious habit of tossing in French words, here and there, I see.

Little did Kate and I dream when we left Nice, little did we dream when we descended at the red station of the Loup up aloft, what the *Ligne du Sud* was so gently bringing us into. We don't know yet; we are only beginning to imagine.

This morning we had our coffee on the terrace, with nice little Madame beaming upon us from her inner door, and hoping we could do with the hard bread and all that. Kate was not rested enough for walking, even a short distance. I am afraid the wolf roared too loudly for her rest last night, but the roar to me was gentle as a sucking dove, at least it put me to sleep the instant my head touched the pillow, and this morning I felt as fit as could be. A *chaise longue* on the terrace with a rug and a Tauchnitz volume by the author of "Vera," with flower scents and bird songs filling the air, made Kate absolutely happy. So off I started while the snail was on the wing and the bird on the thorn — no, it was the other way; at least the hillside was dew-pearled, I will stick to that. My sketching kit was in a knapsack slung over my shoulder, and with it, in my netted bag, a hard brown roll, some chocolate and cher-

MOUNTAIN PATH IN OLD PROVENCE.

ries for my luncheon. Where I was going I did not know in the least, but when I had mounted to the highroad running white and hard to the forest-covered mountains springing up from the ravine, I started on at a good pace down the valley in the direction from which we came by the rail yesterday. On I walked, not stopping, for quite an hour, not because there was nothing to sketch, but because there was everything; also the mountain air stimulated me to explore. Now and then I met a peasant woman carrying farming tools or a great bundle of fresh cut clover on her head; sometimes a man would pass me with a donkey bearing enormous panniers of something in burlap bags, — what I did not know, but I observed every time I passed these, or the like bundles piled on carts as sometimes happened, that a sudden enchanting fragrance would fill the air. This rather unusual circumstance — donkeys and their loads not having been hitherto associated with odours of Araby the blest in my mind — did not arouse my curiosity. I had discovered that Provence was different from other parts of the world, and apparently altogether enchanting.

I suppose many girls of my age — that being four and twenty — would have been timid about walking quite alone through this solemn moun-

tain road, in a region so wholly unknown, but I am fortunate in being destitute of that kind of fear. I never expect any one to notice me particularly, anyway; being a homely, freckled, red-haired business girl, bent on my own affairs, and awakening as little attention as a small brown hen. Kate is the beauty in our family, and if she were strong would be a really and truly belle. As it is, she is something much better, — a really and truly angel.

A turn in the road brought into sight in the distance ahead of me the magnificent profile of a walled town, built on the brow of a hill. Three towers, rising from the midst of crumpled red roofs, were outlined against one of the blue triangles which we discover frequently in this Hinterland. The triangle is formed by two mountain slopes, meeting at their base in a sharp angle, the third and horizontal side of the triangle being the horizon line of the Mediterranean, drawn sharply across from slope to slope, and dividing blue of sky above from blue of sea below.

I stood long, delighting my eyes with the almost too perfect picture, and meditating a sketch, but a mysterious fragrance, which again filled the air around me, made me turn from contemplation of the distance to observe my immediate surroundings. Instantly my decision was made.

Not that mediaeval town off yonder should give me my first Provençal sketch, but the ancient terraced olive orchard, which faced me directly across the lonely road. Never have I seen nobler olive trees in Italy, their great trunks gnarled and fissured, their foliage of that most spiritual grey-green which seems a veil for stars. And the olives grew on a series of terraces, supported by stone walls; the terraces were richly green with deep grass (unlike olive gardens in Italy), and amid the grass blossomed translucent red poppies, dancing in the shade and sun, and the supporting walls were overgrown with glossy ivy, mosses and tiny, vivid vetches. And yet this was not all; all this was but background, to my eyes, to a wilderness of roses on the lowest terrace of all, just a few feet above the level of the road. These made the picture. Such roses! I have heard of the roses of Provence. Now I saw them, — great creamy cups, splashed on the outer petals with crimson; coral colour at their hearts or glowing gold; hanging heads too heavy to hold aloft among glossy, red-brown leaves. Their fragrance was almost overpowering. And growing here by the roadside, unprotected, wild and free as the vetches and poppies! What wonder that, morning though it was, the nightingales, hidden in the old olives, were singing their very hearts

out for joy of them. The loveliness of it all fairly made tears spring to my eyes. No need for further thought. I unfastened my sketching traps, walked backward a few paces along the opposite edge of the road to catch the best point for my sketch, then presently set up my easel and stool in the shadow of a tall hedge behind which the ground sloped rapidly down to the ravine of Le Loup, I imagined.

Hard at work, eleven o'clock came before I could believe it, and I stopped to gnaw my crusty roll, eat my chocolate and further regale myself by crossing the road, scrambling up to the first terrace, and gathering a handful of the roses in order to study at close range their gamut of colour.

As I sat down to my work again, holding up my roses against the sky before my face to capture all their sweetness, I suddenly perceived that the fragrance in which I had luxuriated all the morning was wholly different from their faint and subtle odour.

"What can that odour be?" I was asking myself, when a man's voice behind me startled me with the question in Provençal French:

"What right have you to pick those roses, Mademoiselle?"

The voice, while not harsh, was peremptory and alarming, and much more so when I turned

to see, just beyond the hedge, the head of a young peasant in a coarse straw hat. The face was rough, darkly bearded, and a pair of dark eyes looked across at me, full of sombre challenge, even of menace, I fancied. I trembled a little, which annoyed me excessively. So, turning away from this disquieting apparition and laying my roses with care on the grass beside me, I took up my brush, looking pointedly away from the intruder at the olive orchard opposite.

Apparently my silence and pretended unconcern annoyed the man still further. His head now mysteriously arose at least two feet higher above the hedge, and a pair of powerful shoulders appeared, clothed in the blue blouse of the French *paysan.*

"Do you not know, Mademoiselle, that Père Montaud is most strict about these things? Those roses are his property, and he allows no one to rob him of that. If he finds what you have done he will forbid you painting pictures on his domain."

"What right have you to give orders for this Monsieur Montaud?" I boldly retorted, my courage suddenly rising.

"I work for him. This also is his domain where I stand."

"How could I know that the roses belong to

your master? I supposed they grew wild like the poppies."

The young peasant made a curious exclamation and I was sure I discerned a smile under his moustache.

"Then Mademoiselle is a stranger in this part of Provence," he said more civilly than he had spoken hitherto. "Our roses are our most important crop."

Who ever heard of a crop of roses before!

"Then why do you not put up fences to protect them?" I asked, growing angry myself, as he became less aggressive.

"Because in Provence men trust each other. Do not be angry, Mademoiselle. You are not blamed; you are a foreigner and do not know our way."

I rose, my cheeks burning, I felt, and my eyes flashing, for I have the red-haired girl's temper.

"I am Mademoiselle Mathers; I am *en pension* at the Hotel du Loup. I do not steal roses. You may take these to your master and you may ask him what is their value. To-morrow I shall come again to sketch. You will be here, if you please, and I will pay you whatever price you name."

As I spoke I pulled apart the branches of the hedge, looked through the gap thus made, and

held out the handful of roses. I saw that the man was standing on a short ladder set close against the bole of a low tree, an orange tree as I instantly perceived, in a perfect splendour of bloom. Standing on this ladder his strong figure from the waist up emerged from the tree top, the branches of which surrounded him with dark glossy leaves and rich, creamy clusters of blossoms. Small wonder that the air was heavy with fragrance!

Forgetting all my wrath and injured pride, I exclaimed:

"*Bellissima!* But what is it you do up in that small tree? And there are rows and rows of these orange trees, all the way down the slope! — and workmen are in each of them, and girls also, numbers of them, all on ladders! What is it they are doing?"

"Cutting the orange flowers, Mademoiselle," was the fellow's laconic answer. He had taken the roses without demur, and laid them carefully on his jacket which lay folded on a huge square of canvas which covered the ground beneath the tree.

"What a number of May weddings there must be this year in Provence!" I exclaimed. "But why do you not cut them with longer stems? What possible use can there be for them, snipped off, just one blossom at a time, that way?"

He had stepped back to his ladder now, his shears in hand, and had resumed his work which I thus described. Only his head was now visible. I noticed that his eyes were fixed beyond the hedge row on some object down the road by which I had come from Le Loup.

"We do not use these for weddings," he replied briefly. "They will be made into *neroli* in Grasse, in the *parfumeries*."

I was on the point of asking another question, my exploring zeal being now all to the fore, when a heavy step approaching made me turn and draw back from the gap in the hedgerow. Advancing towards me was a man of sixty, not tall but massively built, dressed in a loosely fitting suit of dark blue, with a broad brimmed hat, below which looked out threateningly a pair of bloodshot and fiery eyes. The man carried a heavy knotted staff and produced altogether a formidable impression. However, as he reached the easel, he removed his hat with a touch of courtly courtesy, said his "*Bon jour, Mademoiselle*," civilly enough, and added, glancing at my half finished sketch, "*très gentille*. But you would do better to paint the Tourettes," and he pointed to the towers of the walled town rising against the sea beyond.

"Later, perhaps, Monsieur," I answered as

blithely as I could, feeling I know not what of dismay and perturbation in this man's presence. But he had already turned his back upon me and now strode through the hedge, holding the stiff stalks apart with his staff as if they had been rushes.

I could see no one now and went back to my work, in which I had curiously lost interest. I heard the voices, however, of the workman and of his master; for that the elderly man was the mighty Père Montaud I had no doubt. Their conversation was the briefest, — a hard, captious note in that of the superior while the young *paysan* seemed to use as few words as possible and spoke in the dull toneless voice of one who expects censure and steels himself against it.

I heard the question, "*Combien?*" repeated harshly more than once by the master, and heard, I was quite sure, the clink of silver coin. Then there was silence. Even the nightingales stopped singing and so did my heart. Some cruel blight seemed to have fallen on everything with the entrance of the old *Propriétaire*. Suddenly my wits returned to me. I realized that the young workman had already fulfilled my command; that the *combien* meant, *how many roses;* that he had himself even now paid the price set by his hard master upon each rose I had presumptu-

ously plucked; and that I was actually a debtor to the poor fellow in coin of the realm. My work for the day ended with this realization. My *stimmung* was gone. Hastily I packed my things together, and then, once more pushing open the gap in the hedge, slipped through to find and to settle with my humble benefactor.

He was nowhere in sight, nor was the old man. The upper part of the grove was deserted. I stood looking down the long decline between the ranks of orange trees, each tree surrounded by its group of girls and men on their low ladders, singing gaily, the petals falling to the canvas below as they worked. I had not courage to start in search of man or master. I can only hope that to-morrow morning I shall find the one. Heaven send not the other! And yet, under all his almost savage sternness that old man was a gentleman.

When I reached our inn I found Kate in great spirits. Madame has secured for her a perfectly safe donkey. Now she can often go with me on my sketching tours. This being so, I face to-morrow without dread. But these Provençals are not the simple guileless peasants one reads of.

Evening. The strangest thing yet has happened. A willow basket of glorious roses was left

here with Madame for me, while we were having siesta. When I asked her who brought it she answered only, "*Le bon Gars.*" I did not like to show surprise or curiosity so did not question further. Is it that my poor *paysan* of the morning is *le bon Gars?*

Gorge du Loup, May 7, —.

"Then if you will not allow me to give you the money for the roses, will you take this little sketch? See, it is finished now."

With this I handed the water-colour, begun yesterday, to *le bon Gars,* as Kate and I decide to call him.

We had been encamped by the roadside with rug, pillows, donkey, luncheon and sketching traps, all the morning. Only now, at half past ten, had my man appeared, walking carelessly down the road and greeting us shyly, yet not awkwardly at all. Kate was watching him, I could see, with a certain sympathetic interest. He is by no means a bad looking fellow, for a "farm hand" as we would say at home, and certainly he made a picture in his blue blouse and wide trousers, belted with a scarf of red worsted folded many times around the waist, the ordinary dress of the labouring class. He had been decidedly grim, however, so long as I urged money

for the roses upon him. He has a dark face and gloomy eyes, but when I offered him the sketch a light sprang into them, which changed their look.

"It is true?" he said. "Mademoiselle means it? It has value, that aquarelle."

"Nothing great, but you can sell it for something, I am sure, in Nice," I replied.

I saw my mistake in Katie's horrified face before the change in his warned me. He handed back the water-colour, saying shortly:

"Mademoiselle does not wish to give me a beautiful thing for my own. Money is not all to a Provençal. *Bon jour.*"

Removing his hat, he was striding towards the hedge to make good his retreat into the orange grove. I barred his way, holding out my hand.

"Forgive me for being so stupid," I stammered in my very worst French. "I sell my pictures myself, you see, and so that side of it occurs to me as most important. I am immensely pleased that the little sketch pleases you for itself. Will you not take it, please, and let us be good friends? I have so many things I want to ask you. It is most inconvenient to have you get cross and go away."

At this *le bon Gars* really smiled, consented also to shake hands, quite gracefully too, and was

appeased. I proceeded to sign my name to the sketch, and while I folded it in paper for him he civilly bade me ask him whatever questions I chose. There followed a friendly conversation in which I left the investigation of the culture of roses and orange blossoms here in the Alps to Kate chiefly, being busy myself with charcoal and paper, having such a model ready to hand. While we gathered information I succeeded in hitting off a very fair likeness, growing more interested every minute, for the fellow has a superbly athletic figure and a well set head, and is so thoroughly the strong Provençal type. He stood, as we talked, by the supporting wall of the rose terrace, his elbow resting upon the moss covered stones. I was established on the opposite side of the road, as yesterday.

"And you say those roses which grow in such quantities everywhere around here are raised for the Paris market, for cut flowers, and that is why they are so valuable?" Kate, thus far working her way, not without difficulty.

"*Parfaitement,* Mademoiselle."

"But do they not gather these for the perfume making also?"

"Oh, no, Mademoiselle. These have little perfume. *La rose du Mai* is the rose for fragrance. It is a small pink flower."

"Does it grow around here?"

"Not precisely here, but towards Vence," and *le bon Gars* pointed off in the direction of Tourette; "and all through this region hundreds of hectares are set out to *la rose du Mai* alone. Hundreds of thousands of pounds are raised on the domain of Père Montaud."

"Where is his domain?" I asked, "or, I mean, where does he live? His domain seems to be everywhere."

"Near Chateauneuf, a few kilomètres from here, is his house. But he owns much of the land hereabouts, and has farmhouses, like the one down yonder at the foot of the orange grove, from which it is worked."

But Kate was more interested in the flowers than in the domain of M. Montaud.

"Tell me, please, more about this *rose du Mai*. Is it in blossom now?"

"No, Mademoiselle, it will bloom in perhaps two weeks more. You must remain and see."

"Is it pretty?"

"Not pretty, but very sweet —"

As he spoke the hedge branches were parted and the figure of the elderly man whom I had seen yesterday, undoubtedly M. Montaud himself, appeared upon the scene. Plainly he was in a fine fury. He nodded curtly, to Kate and me,

but stood, his hands clasped upon his staff, confronting his unlucky labourer with an ugly, cynical smile and eyes which fairly lightened.

" It is a fine thing, Monsieur Hélion," the proprietor spoke slowly, with sarcastic emphasis on the title, " that you have no work of a May morning, save to pay court to the foreign mesdemoiselles. Are the others perhaps also making holiday? "

For a few seconds in which the eyes of the two men seemed to meet and grapple, the tension was extreme. Then, watching the face of *le bon Gars*, I saw him earn his title. The anger which had mounted to his eyes changed to a searching and sorrowful appeal; the flush left his cheek; all the lines of his face softened. Yet there was no smallest subservience in his bearing; rather he seemed mysteriously to come out winner.

Without a word, he slowly crossed the road before us, uncovering with singular self-possession and gentleness as he passed Kate and me, then disappeared through the hedge. The old man had stood motionless, meanwhile, his hands on his staff, his fierce eyes fixed on the poor fellow, watching every move he made, with his ominous smile. But with the departure of the offender the master was another man. He removed his hat, saluted us as if he had not observed our presence until now, wished us a courteous good morning, then stepped

to my easel and, having deferentially asked leave to look, fell to studying the charcoal sketch pinned to the drawing board, it being that of *le bon Gars.*

Kate and I sat silent, as if paralyzed.

"You have caught the likeness, Mademoiselle," M. Montaud commented quietly, his voice as gentle in its modulations as if harshness were a thing impossible to him. "*C'est ça.* But, — then, that is nothing, nothing! The subject is bad. It is a matter of no importance. Are you skilled to good work in portraiture when you can have a worthy subject? Is this your *genre?* or is it the painting of landscape?"

I replied that I worked on both lines, but preferred portrait painting when I could get it to do. I had risen the instant the old tyrant approached the easel, and stood aside now, stiff and unsmiling, feeling intense disapproval of the man and his method of dealing with the kindly young fellow who had just left us. Plainly my feeling was perceptible. Père Montaud looked keenly at me, his glance seeming to penetrate to the innermost working of my mind.

"*Eh bien!*" he said at last, smiling more gently than I had seen him, his cynicism almost kind; "this day the skies are not propitious. *Mademoiselle se fâche contre moi un petit peu, n'est*

ce pas? Another day we shall be less capricious. *Au revoir,*" and down the road toward Tourettes he passed, with slow, massive tread, a figure and a frame as unshakable apparently as the old grey battlements silhouetted against the sea-blue distance.

" Thundering Jove nowhere !" gasped Kate. " He fairly makes my knees and elbows dizzy."

" You look white, love, and we must start back to Le Loup at once. I don't know; he is a perfect old despot, that Père Montaud, but, after all, he interests me."

" But, Rose, the look in his eyes, when he faced that poor fellow! What could make a man look like that? It was not just the anger of a master when he discovers an idle servant; there was *far* more than that between those two."

" Do you think so? It is perfectly true that one felt something fairly tragic in their faces. But *le bon Gars!* Wasn't it magnificent to fairly see him rule his spirit like that? "

" Yes. I would rather have been servant than master."

Gorge du Loup, May 8, —.

Things happen in the Alpes Maritimes, I will say!

We have stayed in all day, as it was windy and

bleak, and it was necessary to write letters, long letters especially to Gabe and Gabrielle, in order to assure them that they could not possibly " put up " with the accommodations of Le Loup, and that all the " Palace Royal " species of hotels in Nice, and everywhere else on the Riviera, are closed.

While I was thus engaged I was summoned down to the little salon by Madame, with great haste and excitement, to receive a call from M. Montaud. There he stood, better dressed, better groomed than when we met on the highway, less imperative, clearer of brow and eye, obviously conciliatory. I saw that I was right in my estimate of him as born a gentleman. What a pity he had not stayed gentle!

After a civil interchange which drew hard upon my vocabulary, Monsieur Montaud produced his errand. He had a daughter; a year since, she died; he mourned her loss (this was tragically evident in his drawn face as he spoke); he possessed only photographs; a curl of her hair; her dresses, gloves, that sort of thing. Would it be possible for me to paint a portrait from these? He knew no artist worthy the name, and for no consideration would he permit these precious relics to go out from under his roof. It would be necessary to work there, but all would be made easy, a

carriage sent daily for Mademoiselle and Mademoiselle her sister. He would pay whatever honorarium was named. He waited with unmistakable anxiety for my reply.

At first I was much touched by the unexpected softening of this iron like old man and my impulse was to consent. Then suddenly a picture of him as he had stood and smiled that hateful, cynical tyranny of his down upon *le bon Gars*, came between him and me and I did not speak.

" Mademoiselle would naturally wish to know better the subject. That I foresaw. I have brought with me these things." And Père Montaud took out a package wrapped in tissue paper, tied with a black ribbon, and spread upon a table several photographs, taken at various ages. Some of them were tinted. They represented a charming girl with red-brown hair and remarkably beautiful blue eyes. I saw his heavy hand tremble as he touched them.

" A lovely face," I murmured.

" Do you think you could succeed? " he asked with poignant earnestness.

" Monsieur, I cannot tell. The subject is most appealing and I would be glad to do my best; but the subject is not all. I am dependent, too much so, upon the environment in which I work.

I could not paint that gentle creature in an atmosphere of ungentleness. I cannot answer at once. I do not feel ready to undertake it."

"But what is your meaning?" he asked, plainly astonished. "In 'an atmosphere of ungentleness!' Does Mademoiselle fancy she will be ill-treated at Montaud Manor?"

"I am not sure, Monsieur."

The old man stared at me with a gaze like an eagle's for piercing intentness, but did not speak.

"I have seen you, without cause, treat others ill who serve you and who seek to serve you well."

There was a guttural growl under Père Montaud's breath, nothing more. I knew that he was stupefied by my boldness. I went on:

"I am an American, and Americans cannot see injustice, in however small a way, without resenting it. We like fair play. That young workman whom you have treated in my presence almost insultingly, had tried his best to do his duty for you and also to shield me from your exaction. I picked those roses, day before yesterday, supposing them to be wayside flowers. Your servant upbraided me soundly for the trespass, on your behalf, as it was his duty to do. Then, because he was at heart, however humble in station, a gentleman, he took upon himself

the odium of the petty fault, and paid you himself for them, out of his poverty. I think you treated him ill to let him do that, and yesterday you were cruel to him."

I had warmed up rapidly when I found courage to speak out my indignation; words had come well to command. Now, doubting not in the least that the old man would be far more angry with me than I was with him, I rose to put an end to the interview.

But Père Montaud did not rise. "*S'il vous plait*, Mademoiselle," he said, quite gently persuading me to remain. "It is then your idea that I should take off my hat before this young labourer in whom you see a gentleman? Am I to beg his pardon, or what is it you require?"

Amazed, I looked at him a moment and then laughed outright, realizing myself quite beyond my depth.

"It is not for me to require, M. Montaud," I said finally. "I only spoke of the incidents because they have given me a disinclination to go to your house and myself try to serve you, perhaps ineffectually."

"That is well reasoned, Mademoiselle. Your point is clearly made. However, I am not in the habit of showing rudeness to ladies, and you need have no such fear. Between the young man you

defend with so much spirit, and me, there exist peculiar relations. He is not, perhaps, precisely what you think him."

"Nevertheless, I like him," I answered firmly, now bent on closing the conversation; "I trust him, too, and I believe he is worthy, M. Montaud, of your trust."

"But my errand. Is it then all in vain?"

The old man had gathered up his sacred pictures, enclosed them carefully in the tissue, and tied them with the black ribbon. His face, his action touched me deeply.

"I do not say that I decline; I do not say that I accept. I wish to consult my sister. To-morrow I will give you my answer."

"Very well, Mademoiselle Rose, I shall await it with patience."

I was surprised that he knew my name, and showed it.

"I have noticed the name on your books. It was her name also," and he touched his pocket. Our eyes met, and there was no unkindness in them now, for tears softened his fiery, haggard vision.

"I will send Hélion, the young man whose part you have taken, to bring me your answer."

"Very well. We shall be all the morning down on the road a mile from Tourettes. I am going

ON THE ROAD FROM TOURETTES.

to begin sketching the place, at your suggestion. *Au revoir.*"

With that I left. Now I am thinking hard.

Gorge du Loup, May 9, —.

On a knoll thick grown with wild thyme and pink sainfoin, beside a wayside shrine from which is seen a glorious stretch of the Mediterranean in the distance and in the foreground the rugged outlines of Tourettes, we made our camp this morning. Everywhere below us stretched rose-fields, gorgeous with bloom.

While the day was lovely, and everything apparently to my mind, I was not at all at ease, not having yet reached a decision regarding Père Montaud's request. And early, while the dew still clung to the grass, there was *le bon Gars*, " the young man Hélion," on the spot.

" Have you a note to send to Père Montaud? " he asked promptly, after civil greeting.

I replied that I was not yet quite ready to send the expected message and Hélion explained that the Propriétaire did not expect him to come with it until noon. He plainly had no knowledge regarding his errand, save that he was to fetch a note.

" Then you will go to work for the morning and return here later? " I asked.

" No, Mademoiselle, I am not working to-day. I am no longer employed by Père Montaud. If it does not displease mesdemoiselles I can remain until the message is ready."

Much surprised, I gladly acquiesced in this proposal, and Hélion proceeded to care for the donkey, make Kate comfortable, adjust my easel better, and in various ways to contribute to our comfort. I had noticed at once that he wore no longer the labourer's costume, but a perfectly *comme il faut* business suit; that he had shaved his half-grown beard, and altogether had a new air of polish and of independence.

" But sit down, please, on that very comfortable rock, Monsieur Hélion," I said laughingly, in the midst of his labours, " and tell us, if you can, that it is not on our account that you have lost your place."

" *Lost my job?* Is it not so you would say it in America? " This in English, to our surprise. It then appeared that Hélion had learned English in school and spoke it well and fluently. This was a delightful discovery and gave a new *camaraderie* at once.

" No," he proceeded, " it was bound to come, and it was time. There is a point beyond which a man may not go without losing his self-respect. That point was reached before you came here,

Mademoiselle, and I only did what I had to do."

"But where will you find work? In Vence, perhaps, for the season of the orange flowers?"

"No, I am not sure. I may even emigrate to America. It is under discussion. Mademoiselle, do you know you have a favourite Provençal name — Rose?"

"Is it a favourite here?"

"Yes, on account of our great Carthusian saint, Rosaleyne."

"I have never heard of her," said Kate. "Could you tell us her story? I dearly love saints' tales."

"I could, Mademoiselle, and gladly. I am Protestant, *moi;* my mother was of a family Huguenot since the sixteenth century, but she, too, loved Saint Rosaleyne, as all Provençals do. My sister was named for her, and I for her brother, Hélion de Villeneuve, grand master of the Knights of St. John of Malta."

"When did these interesting people live?" I asked.

"Rosaleyne died in 1329. She was Abbess of the Carthusian Convent of La Celle-Roubaud, which is not far from Draguignan, that is west a little distance from Grasse. She quite belonged to our countryside, and every year great crowds

follow the procession of her relics. They are said still to shed perfume."

"It seems to me," interjected Kate, "that everything sheds perfume in Provence."

"In May, yes," returned Hélion, smiling. "Roses belong to Rosaleyne, for the legend says that while she was very young she gave away all her substance to feed the poor, and that her father, who was a hard man, blamed her for her charity when he found her with her apron full of loaves of bread, whereupon the loaves were transformed into roses."

"I hope that miracle transformed her father's hard heart," I commented with a little emphasis.

"It must have done that. While she lived he could never have been harsh again. She became a very wonderful and noble woman and did great good through all Provence. But she and her brother were devoted to each other in such a degree that the most beautiful part of her story takes in Hélion de Villeneuve also. He is said to have been the bravest leader the Knights of Malta ever had; three times he conquered the Moors but at last he was taken prisoner in Morocco. One night after long prayers for freedom for himself and for all Christians, then in deadly peril from the Moslems, he fell asleep. He dreamed then that he saw his sister Rosaleyne come to

him, open his prison doors and strike off his fetters. He awoke to find himself standing outside his prison, alone, in the moonlight, his fetters gone. He escaped, took ship to Provence and landed on these shores of ours. The first tidings which met him was that his sister had died at the very hour when he was set free, crying out just as she passed away, '*Adieu, pour la dernière fois, Adieu!*' We here in Provence hold that her soul went forth that night to set her brother free."

We did not speak, but Kate and I exchanged a glance in which each challenged the other for answer to the growing wonder at the language and the understanding thus suddenly given, as it seemed to us, to *le bon Gars*. Had he been transformed or had we failed to discern the refinement of feeling, the intelligence which belonged to him?

"What a sweet, pathetic story," murmured Kate, recovering herself. "Did you say that you were brought up a Protestant?"

"No, Mademoiselle. My mother belonged to a Huguenot family, but my father being a strong Catholic, we were brought up as he preferred. My mother died many years ago. When I was sent away to get my education, however, I was thrown among Protestants, learned to believe as they do, and became one with them. That was in the city of Nimes."

" And your sister," I asked, " is she, like you, Protestant, — your sister named for Saint Rosaleyne? "

" My sister is dead, Mademoiselle," was the answer, given very quietly.

At this Kate and I were undeniably startled and betrayed it to each other in a glance.

" Monsieur Hélion," I began, impulsively, impelled to use the title, albeit hardly conscious that I did so, " was there not trouble for you in your family when you became Protestant, your father being Catholic? "

" There was much trouble for me in my family, on that account, and on account of other ideas which I learned when away from home. I came back from Nimes eager to work out my new ideas of living a democratic, brotherly life here on the domain, of doing away with the old grudges and the hard oppressive ways which had been a tradition in my father's house. I suppose I am what is called a Christian Democrat."

Almost breathlessly I asked, as he paused:

" And you have not been able to carry out your hopes and plans? "

" No," the young man answered sadly. " At first I thought it would come. My father seemed not averse to listening to my views. This was when Rose was alive. She was the one influence

which held us together. But she died a year ago, you see, and my father has seemed almost to hate me since. He became so angered because I would not return to the Catholic Church, and would not give up my social ideas, that he considers me no longer as a son of his house."

"Then you told him to make you as one of his hired servants?" asked Kate, very gently.

"Yes. I could not leave him, you see, if he would let me stay. He is growing an old man, and he is truly sad and very much alone. All his neighbours fear him, I think. And so, to remain near, I asked him to give me work as a labourer; this was six months ago."

"Have you disliked it?"

"No. It gave me a chance to know our working people better, and it did them good to see that a Montaud is not afraid to labour."

"I begin to understand now," I remarked slowly, "why Monsieur Hélion Montaud is called *le bon Gars*."

He gave me a deprecating and yet a pleased smile. All was now clear between us; we asked no further explanation; but I was trying to think my way through to something. If I could help it, there should not be a complete rupture between these two men, who so sadly need each other. Something must be attempted.

In the end I wrote my letter to M. Montaud as follows:

"Monsieur: — You have expressed your wish to send a carriage to convey us to Montaud Manor. If you will permit M. Hélion to be our escort on these visits to your house, my sister and I will be ready, and I will begin work on the portrait to-morrow afternoon. I do not care to go unaccompanied.

"Rose Mathers."

Gorge du Loup, May 10, —.

Promptly at two o'clock this afternoon a lumbering family carriage with a pair of large black horses and a coachman in somewhat worn livery, was driven up to our hotel. M. Hélion alighted and stood in silence at the carriage door while Kate and I entered, then took the seat facing us.

We turned toward the west when we struck the main road, then south, and passing a picturesque cliff village, called Le Bar, turned presently from the highroad and entered a long avenue lined with poplars. A quarter of a mile down this avenue we reached a great iron gate which stood open, and passing through, we soon saw before us the long façade of a plain, substantial, half timbered house, shaded by ancient elms.

We had not talked much on the way. Hélion was sober and *distraite*. Casually he informed us that he had promised to keep his father's books for the present and was lodging in the porter's cottage. This we had passed at the entrance gate, and here Hélion had departed, promising to rejoin us when we drove back to Le Loup.

Père Montaud stood in the open house door and assisted us to alight; then led us through the house to the garden front which was charming, in the old French fashion. We walked down through a path, bordered richly with purple iris, to a stone pavilion, the pillars of which were covered with ivy and the climbing saffrona rose. Here wine and cake were brought to us by a tidy but timid housekeeper, who watched me with a wistfulness which struck me as peculiarly pathetic. Our host was plainly under some mental strain; he looked older than before, and his eyes wandered restlessly from one of us to the other while we tried to do justice to the refreshment.

"You have the colour in your hair of my daughter, Mademoiselle," he said to me abruptly; "I saw that when I visited you. Also you have a tone in your voice like hers."

"I am glad," I answered.

"I, too, am glad, Mademoiselle Rose," he rejoined, lingering on the name.

Down from a low hedge below the pavilion, there stretched far away to the brow of the hill on which the manor house stands, a field of vivid green.

"What is this that you raise over there?" Kate asked M. Montaud. "It is so curious the way those feathery vines are trained in the endless rows of little low arches; so very pretty, too."

"You find it pretty?" Monsieur seemed surprised. "It is not pretty now, perhaps, but two or three weeks hence, Mademoiselle, the field will be pink with bloom. It is *la rose du Mai*, my best crop."

We now returned to the house and I was established for my work in a long, low room, a conventional salon, with a certain distinction given it by many books and much old carved furniture. Père Montaud took Kate out to a pergola on a terrace, commanding a superb view of the valley; here she was made happy with her work bag and a book. I felt it imperative to be alone for the very critical work which I had undertaken. Soon there were spread before me, by the old housekeeper, various girlish dresses, scarfs, little high-heeled, buckled shoes, laces, a fan, besides the many photographs of Rose Montaud. The father came to the door once, looked in, then turned abruptly away, and we did not see him again.

I was left alone until five o'clock when the housekeeper (they call her simply Madame), returned and asked me to come out on the terrace and have fruit and coffee. This Kate and I declined. The carriage was ready and we drove away, Hélion joining us at the lodge below. Again he was silent, and something in his look hurt me. He has a noble face; so wholly different from what I thought it at first; young, full of power and possibility but deeply, tragically shadowed.

Kate and I feel that we have entered into a cloud, and, like the disciples of old, we fear as we enter into the cloud.

Gorge du Loup, May 23, —.

We have been nearly every day to Montaud Manor since I wrote my last notes of this strange adventure, into which we have been so unexpectedly led. The first day was type for all which have followed, except that after the first week Père Montaud has come into the long salon each day at five o'clock and studied my work. Sometimes he has made no comment; sometimes he has suggested a change; once he said:

"It has been given you to comfort an old man's broken heart."

Then I knew that he believed in my accomplishing what he hoped.

Hélion has always escorted us to and fro and always left us at the gates. We have been in to the lodge which he shares with the old man who acts as porter. He has a very snug little office, seems hard at work and much more cheerful. He invited us to enter it, I am sure, because he wanted to speak a few words unheard by his father's coachman.

"You must observe," he said after we had looked around at his books and other matters a little, "that a change in my position has come about; thanks to you, I am not likely to emigrate just now. My father has asked me to do this work for him, for a time at least, and seems glad to trust it to me. This would not have happened had it not been for the way in which Mademoiselle Rose took my part with him. That gave him a light where all had been dark."

Devoutly we hope the light may increase. It is something that they two now must confer regarding business matters. But Hélion, I am sure, never enters the manor house. Yesterday Madame came very softly into the salon, and with many furtive looks about her spoke to me in whispers, as I worked.

"Oh, Mademoiselle," she murmured, "if you can only persuade Père Montaud to bring *le bon Gars* back into this house, I will pray the Holy

Virgin night and day to bless you. Never was so good, so true a lad, so obedient to his father, so kind to us all. And the master is good, too, at heart, but he has hard ways and all the people hereabout think him worse than he is. It was different, oh very different, when our little angel, Mademoiselle Rose, was alive. Since she left us there is nothing in this house but bitterness and sorrow. And Mademoiselle is like her, so every servant in the house says."

"Do you think Père Montaud ever cared at all for his son?"

"Yes, Mademoiselle; he cared for him with passion all his life and he does to-day. But the master cannot endure to be crossed, or to have new ways brought in on the old place. His pride is like steel, and his will, but he is breaking his own heart twice over, and that is the truth."

Small doubt of that!

Gorge du Loup, May 26, —.

It often happens to me in portrait painting that the moment of completion arrives suddenly, unexpected even by myself. This has been my experience to-day.

Yesterday, when I was preparing to leave, Père Montaud hung long over my work, every line of which he knows as he knows his own hand. He

did not leave it when I bade him good-bye; rather I went out of the room softly, leaving him plainly unobservant of my going. To-day when I went into the salon, uncovered the portrait and looked, I saw that it had life and that it asked little more at my hand. Père Montaud begged me days ago not to touch the mouth again, it was then "so like." To-day I saw that the eyes had an indefinable something which I had feared to miss. Soul, I suppose, is what I mean.

I think I trembled a little when I saw that essentially my work was done; I know I cried. But I went to every door and locked them all, then set to and retouched such small details of drapery and chair and background as I dared, then knew perfectly that I could do no more.

I had heard M. Montaud at the door twice while I worked, but I had made no sign that I heard him when he tried to open it, and his heavy, slow step had receded down the hall. Now, I left the room myself, locked the door, put the key in my pocket, and went out towards the pergola to find him. On the threshold of his own private office, near the outer door by which we reach the terrace, I found him standing, his arms crossed upon his breast, his head sunk a little forward. Seeing me, he shook back his hair and held out

a hand cordially. He had not seen me since yesterday.

" You are welcome, *chère* Mademoiselle," he said. " What is that your face has to tell me? I think I know. Your work — it is finished? "

" I believe so, truly," I answered. " I think I can do no more unless you or Mademoiselle Rose's brother can suggest changes which would make the work more to your thought."

The old man threw up his chin and glanced at me sharply, under narrowing eyelids.

" We will go to the salon at once if you please," he said, starting down the hall.

" Yes, Monsieur, but not until your son joins us. It is necessary for me to have his judgment also on a work of this importance. Will you kindly send some one to the lodge? I am sure Monsieur Hélion is there and will be willing to come."

With this I walked slowly and apparently unconcernedly out towards the terrace.

" Mademoiselle! "

The word rang sharply and turned me back.

It was the Père Montaud I had first encountered who now faced me; harsh, implacable.

" Mademoiselle, I shall cause your errand to be done, but, understand, you cannot wind me as you would like, perhaps, around your finger

and carry out your romantic peace-making notions as concerns my son. He may come since you demand it, but he comes at your request, *not at mine.*"

Then I felt my face grow pale and a pang of desperation struck my heart.

"Very well, Père Montaud," I said quite gently. "You can judge. You are in your own house. Say, if you please, that Rose, the friend of Monsieur Hélion, asks him to do her the favour of coming up to the salon."

The word was given. Ten minutes later, M. Montaud and I still standing in the hall, Hélion appeared in the wide open door of the house and looked with a question in his eyes at his father.

"Come," I said, holding out my hand, not daring to leave the fate of the day to the impulse of cruelty which I feared would control the old man. "Come, we must together decide whether it is time to call the portrait finished."

Then we entered in silence, together. The salon was closed, shaded by the drawn persiennes, except for one window, where a shaft of the afternoon sunshine slanted through, forming a field of light around the portrait, standing on its tall easel in the centre of the room. I had made the figure life size, seated, three-quarters length. It showed a young girl with red-brown

hair carelessly blown back from her forehead, curling lightly about the ears; a girl with blue eyes full of an inner light; a fair, transparent skin; firm sweet lips; a long, slender white throat, lifting the head up with lofty grace. The dress was white, transparent, with delicate lines of lace about the girlish shoulders. The hands held roses in the lap. The beauty of the picture was the beauty which I had discovered in the various prints given me to study; that of a holy and noble spirit, shining through pure and delicate flesh. It was not a mere light-hearted girl face; it was the face of a saint.

Now Hélion Montaud had seen no trace of the process, or of the materials out of which the portrait had been evolved. What to his father had become familiar day by day, in every suggestion, was to him a revelation, something unguessed and undreamed. The face and figure seemed to leap out of the room's dusk to meet him. He held out his arms in a wholly unconscious gesture, as of welcome unutterable, while every tinge of colour left his face. Then, forgetting every one, caring not whether he was observed or no, the rugged figure shook with a man's awful sobbing, and tears rained down his cheeks.

"*Ma Rose,*" he murmured, "*ma petite ange; ma Sainte Rosaleyne.*"

My eyes were upon the father, not upon the son. I saw the iron frame of the man tremble as he watched the other's anguish and worship; I saw, if I can dare to say it, the fountains of the frozen deep within the man's great heart break up. In that moment the imperious voice of fatherhood spoke and was heard. I knew that. I saw Père Montaud's hands laid upon Hélion's shoulders; I saw his features working with the strong man's emotion. I heard him say:

"Hélion, *mon fils, — c'est notre sainte fille.*" Then I came away. More was not for me to hear nor for me to see.

I found Kate and took her by the hand.

"Let us go as quickly as we can down the garden," I said, dashing away a tear or two. "We do not belong here now."

Down between the purple iris borders we made haste to the garden house and there we sat long together very quietly. Beyond the hedge stretched the broad field where the *rose du Mai* was bursting into bloom. The air was loaded with its exquisite odour, subtle, penetrating, an ecstasy of fragrance. But we wished only that we might be spirited away from the place, beautiful as it was, and full-filled with hard-won joy. For as I had said to Kate, we did not belong in that house.

Gorge du Loup, May 27, —.

Hélion declares that I was wrong yesterday when, feeling that we should leave him and his father to themselves, we made bold to order the old coachman and drove back here alone, no one perceiving. He says that we belonged just there, just then, and is at infinite pains to make me understand.

We have been walking up into the recesses of the great Gorge, he and I alone. He came quite early, and asked me to walk with him, and came bringing me a single, small, pink rose.

"It is *la rose du Mai*," he said and smiled. "It has blossomed now and brings joy. But it is you, dear Mademoiselle Rose, who have brought the joy; it is you who are truly our rose of the May."

I tried not to be talked to so extravagantly, but he was not easily controlled.

"Do you remember," he asked me later, very earnestly, "how, when I told you the tale of our Provençal saint, Rosaleyne, I said that we here believe that the soul of the saint went forth to set her brother free?"

I nodded, I could not speak. "It was the soul of my darling sister," he went on, his voice breaking a little, "that came out from your lovely portrait of her yesterday, and set me free, and set free my dear father. We were both bound in

fetters of pride and resentment, disappointment and humiliation. It was not all my father's fault; no, no! I was a foolish youngster, puffed up with pride in my fine new theories. I began all wrong. I see it now. But the fetters are broken, and it is two girl saints together who have broken them."

Gorge du Loup, June 5, —.

We are going to leave to-morrow. It is inevitable. Gabe and Gabrielle are at the door with their automobile, figuratively speaking. They are in Nice and insist upon our joining them in "touring" the Riviera, the Rhone Valley, the Chateau country, — everything.

For a week we have been incredibly happy, for each day we have seen the incredible happiness of Montaud *père* and Montaud *fils*. I believe that nowhere on earth is the tie between father and son so strong as among French people. That is the reason why the feud with Hélion worked such havoc with his father, making him fairly demoniacal. He is kinder than kind now to *tout le monde*. Perhaps kindest of all to me. Hélion lives where he should live now, in his father's house, and Kate and I have dined with them in charming old-fashioned state. It was an event!

But both father and son, with the quaint French

naïveté, declare that the house is a forlorn and cheerless place without a woman to rule within, while they together rule without, and that that wished-for woman must be their *Rose du Mai.* Thus it is not wholly impossible that we shall sometime return to Provence. Perchance some spirit of American democracy may be infused into these social theories which *mon cher* Hélion is more than ever, but more wisely than ever, bent upon putting in practice on his domain.

Such was the history of Rose Mathers' sketching ramble in the Niçois Hinterland, a year ago.

Appended to the last leaf I found the following note in the hand of her sister Kate, dated two days before the manuscript reached us: —

" Rose and Hélion will be married next week. If it were not that they leave at once for a month in the Engadine, they would urge you and Monsieur when in Grasse to visit Montaud Manor and see *la rose du Mai* in perfect bloom."

CHAPTER X

OUR LADY OF FLOWERS

TOWARDS evening on the day following our reading of Miss Mathers' record of a year ago, we left Cannes and took a little gossiping railroad up to Grasse. Our interest in the mountain region lying behind the Riviera had been distinctly spurred by the story of *La Rose du Mai*, and it was with great expectations of a land of roses and orange blossoms, jasmine and lavender, that we approached the hill town, so famous for its perfume making, one of the great industries, indeed, of France.

In less than an hour after leaving Cannes we saw the city on its high hill slope, a confusion of crumpled, lichen-covered roofs, dominated by a strong church tower; altogether a town of a grave and hoary aspect, suggestive, in a way, of Perugia. By a funicular from the station we reached a level at which a viaduct crossing a ravine led to the hotel quarter of the town. Two hotels only were open at this, the off season:

the Grand Hotel, very expensive, where Queen Victoria once passed the season of her annual visit to the South of France; and the Hotel Victoria, just below it, where the Queen never stayed. Despite the name, the second was the moderate priced house, and we were driven to it in two senses. It was a comfortable enough house to all appearance; our room, with a balcony overlooking the city, the mountains and the sea, was furnished in the approved French style; the food was well cooked, and the house seemed popular with a large contingent of people from Paris and the north. M'sieur and I, however, found a curiously repellent atmosphere in the establishment, which increased perceptibly as we remained. On the whole, Grasse is decidedly lacking in hotel accommodation, considering its growing popularity as a winter and spring resort.

The following day, being Sunday, we could not visit the *parfumeries*. There are forty-seven in all, I believe, in the town; their tall chimneys prick up between the houses in every direction. We set out after breakfast to see something of Grasse, but more particularly to find the rose-fields and orange-groves among which we supposed it to lie; confidently also we looked for the beauty of such gardens as we had loved at Beaulieu.

We rambled about through dusty streets and grey, now and then finding picturesque, vaulted passages and a sunny Cours; charming views of the rolling hills, clothed in cypress and Aleppo pine, between Grasse and the shining silver of the sea; an old church or two, and a somewhat volatile statue of Fragonard. But flowers we saw not. A certain gloom, in the absence of any softening touch of nature or of art, seemed to us to pervade the town and when we returned to the cheerlessness of our hotel I was more inclined to homesickness than I had been since landing on these shores.

While we were at luncheon, I observed a charming woman, daintily but quietly dressed, who sat, as I had seen her before, at a small table alone, always with a book for a companion. I had not heard a word of English spoken since reaching Grasse, but I had an intuitive idea that this guest of the Victoria was not French. Glancing over at her, our eyes met, she smiled in a peculiarly winning way, and said in English that she hoped we were finding Grasse interesting.

Upon this I impulsively left my seat, crossed to her table, and with a word of apology, replied that I found it, *au contraire*, most uninteresting; could not, in fact, perceive why we should have come up here. There seemed no very obvious

reason for having done so. The lady was much amused, but said she agreed with me perfectly; she had always known Grasse was stupid, but had never found it so stupid as during this week-end. Meanwhile she had caused me to be seated opposite her, had introduced herself as Miss S—, and, my luncheon being finished, we talked on, leaving M'sieur alone, to his bread and cheese and oranges.

"I do not wonder in the least that you are homesick," remarked Miss S— after a few more confidences on my part. "I have lived for years in this part of France but I am almost homesick myself. I was obliged to come over here on a matter of business and thought I might like to stay a week, but I shall go home Tuesday morning. There is nothing to stay for."

Miss S— was English; her graciousness and kindliness made it possible for me to ask questions, nevertheless.

"Then you live somewhere about here?"

"Yes, in Vence, twenty kilométres nearer Nice on the Ligne du Sud."

"Then can you tell me, where are the flowers which we have come up to Grasse to see? We have heard so much of the thousands of violets and millions of roses, and all that, that we expected to find the town simply smothered in them.

In reality, since we left Arles, a week ago, we have not seen a town so nearly flowerless."

"It is true, is it not? No, for the flowers one must go out into the Alpine villages. You will find the flower farms in almost any direction, but particularly around Vence. However, if you turn in the opposite direction from the hotel to that which you took this morning, you can see charming villas and gardens and the views are really exquisite."

M'sieur having now joined us, we went together to the salon. In short order, which is the traveller's order *par excellence*, it was arranged that we put ourselves under Miss S—'s guidance at three in the afternoon, for a walk which should include the pretty end of Grasse, afternoon service in the Anglican chapel, and tea in a garden.

We went to our room in good spirits, feeling that we had "found a friend." What a friend we were then far from foreseeing.

On starting for our walk a few hours later, the first object of interest pointed out to us, as we turned up the road away from the town, was the villa and garden of Miss Alice de Rothschild. The villa is so built as to command views which must be fairly thrilling in their sweep over mountains and sea, but the garden is the glory with its indescribable tropical luxuriance. In the absence

IN THE ROTHSCHILD GARDEN, GRASSE.

of the family, strangely enough, as it seemed to us, strangers were not allowed to enter, but much of its beauty was kindly visible from the highway. From the record of an habitué of this renowned garden I quote a brief and accurate description:

"I think the hanging gardens of Babylon must have been in the creator's mind when she first planned to lay out kilométres of terraces on the face of a steep hill and on both sides of the high road. The olive trees have not been cut down, but beneath the shadow of the grey-green trees you find lakes of flowers of carefully harmonized or contrasted hues. Under the dark blue iris you have the narcissus of the poets; beside the lavender and the periwinkle there are scarlet anemones and tulips of every hue. The rock plants are curious, for there are thickets of Barbary aloes, and the rare Aloïs Dickiana, overhung by a terrace that is clothed with the vivid coloured Lotus and the purple Maurandia, and shadowed by a thicket of Mimosa, of Genista Candicans, along with the lovely Spanish broom. Grouped on the grass of the lower garden are some plants that over and above their intrinsic value and beauty are valued by their owner because of the hand that planted them; for example, there is the blue Chaemerops planted by Queen Victoria, who often enjoyed the hospitality of this garden.

But it is the hill garden that is so truly original. There the scenery grows wilder as you ascend and leaving the lakes of tulips and the reefs of Mimosa behind, you meet with seas of small wall flowers and wild lavender, till you reach the Pavilion where the garden ends and the oak-woods, the old unreclaimed forest of Malbosc, stretches for miles along the hillside. . . . The whole thing is a feast to the eyes, and to the intelligence, for one recognizes how much skill, ingenuity, patience and foresight have gone to the creation of this paradise on a spur of the mountain that rises above Grasse."

Strolling very slowly on beyond this marvellous garden, we passed stately villas, the winter homes of famous French senators and millionaires, and came presently to a pretty chapel set on a green and flowery slope. A clerical gentleman stood at the gate, with him two ladies.

"Excuse me," he said, as we also approached the gate. "May I ask if you were intending to come to the afternoon service? Because, if you were, that will make six in the congregation, but otherwise there would be but three, and we would omit the service." It was the incumbent of the chapel.

Miss S— signified that we had come for the purpose of attending service. If not too much

trouble, I felt like adding, the situation seeming a little singular altogether. Upon this the clergyman disappeared into the sacristy to don his surplice, and we, by the west door, entered the chapel and constituted half of the congregation during the simple service which followed.

Coming out of the church, we continued our walk along the level highroad, eastward, and presently saw, on the slope of the hill at our left, a pleasant house with a small but attractive palm garden, enclosed in rich hedges, densely shaded, and furnished with small tables and chairs. This was the goal of our walk, as projected by Miss S— and a goodly goal we declared it when we found places around a table and were served, by an engaging young English lady, with the best tea and hot toasted muffins we had found in France. In addition to this, *thé complet* included individual tiny glasses of crystal-clear jelly, each tied up with snowy paper and a ribbon the colour of the fruit composing the jelly. Altogether most enticing fare and keenly relished by us all. But we found that the days of the "Anchor Tea Room" at Grasse were numbered, for in a week or two the pleasant Englishwomen who keep it would strike their tent and carry their pretty teapots and jelly glasses to Brittany, where at Dinard they fly their flag for the summer months.

Thus our Sunday in Grasse was redeemed from dulness and made congenial by the fortunate encounter with Miss S— with whom, on our hotel-ward way, we agreed to drive back to Vence on Tuesday morning, for sight of the flower farms of Provence. That night the nightingales sang from the fragrant thickets of the Rothschild garden all night long, as we had never heard birds sing before. It was well worth coming to Grasse, M'sieur declared, for this alone.

The following morning we devoted to a visit to "*Notre Dame des Fleurs*," — the famous *parfumerie* of Bruno Court, founded in 1812 in an ancient convent. Entering from the Rue des Cordeliers by a mediaeval courtyard, where a few remnants of its ecclesiastical days gave picturesqueness, we passed through various spotless rooms in which girls were packing boxes and bottles, and entered a large reception and salesroom, combined. Although the Bruno Court firm manufactures only the raw material of perfume making, — the essential oils, such as *neroli* and attar of roses, and other foundation preparations, — yet, to meet the demand for souvenirs on the part of visitors, they offer a very fascinating array of perfumes, soaps and toilet waters, made elsewhere (or so we understood it) from their own products.

GATHERING TUBEROSES.

A fortunate introduction brought us at once into contact with the manager of the Bruno Court establishment, M. Merle, and by him we were furnished with information, notably contained in an article by Ernest Dixon, which we found surprising in a high degree, and which prepared us to watch the processes of the manufacture with augmented interest.

In the first place the production of perfume from animal or mineral and chemical sources, has no place here. Vegetable products alone are used. From December to March the time is spent in extracting perfume from patchouly, sandal-wood, rose-wood, and other dried vegetable products of aromatic properties. In March begins the work upon fresh flowers. This lasts until December. All the flowers are grown in the surrounding country and brought to Grasse as soon as picked. There are eight essential flowers devoted to this purpose, beginning in March with the Parma violet; then, following, jonquil, orange blossom, rose, jasmine, mignonette, tuberose, and cassia buds. Heliotrope, myrtle, carnation, rose geranium and several other flowers, are used in lesser quantities.

Each flower must be picked at its own psychological moment, when its odour is strongest, then hurried to the factory; as, for instance, roses,

as soon as open; carnations, after three hours of exposure to the sun; jasmine, soon after sunrise. It is said that the Empress of Russia uses a toilet water made of violets picked near Grasse, between five and seven o'clock in the evening.

As illustration of the art devoted to the composition of perfume, I found the comments of an English author on the musical scale in perfume well worth quotation:

" There used to be in London a good authority on perfumes, whose sense of smell was so perfectly developed that, no matter how many different odours were in his laboratory he could distinguish every one by name and, — knowing the analogy that exists between musical scales and colours, actually went so far as to assert that a certain scale or gamut exists among odours as well as sounds. The sharp smells correspond with the high notes, and the heavy smells with the low notes in the musical scale. He could take fifty different odours and assign to each in accordance with its relative strength of smell, a position in his so-called gamut of odours, so that it became possible to make a *bouquet* merely by reference to the notation on the staves. That is to say, the odours selected for the *bouquet* had to correspond in this gamut like the notes of a chord in music,

DISTILLATION OF LAVENDER IN THE ALPS.

in which, as every one knows, one false note will destroy a harmony."

To return to Notre Dame des Fleurs! —

Four millions, eight hundred thousand pounds of roses are used by the Bruno Court factory each year; three millions and a half pounds of orange blossoms; two hundred eighty thousand pounds of violets; five hundred sixty thousand pounds jasmine; one hundred forty thousand pounds tuberoses; and thirty thousand pounds jonquils.

The rate paid for these flowers is as follows: about six cents a pound for roses; ten cents or a little more for orange blossoms; four times as much for jasmine and tuberoses as for roses; while violets bring twice as much as jasmine.

To produce one pound of attar of rose it takes twenty-two thousand pounds of roses, or three million single blossoms. A quick worker can gather forty pounds of roses in four hours; but only six pounds of jasmine. A good day's work would yield thirty-six pounds of tuberoses; while it would require a day to pick twenty pounds of either violets or orange blossoms. Wild thyme and lavender, which grow on the slopes of the Alps, the lavender being peculiar to the higher regions, are not brought down to the factories, as they do not bear transportation. "*Distil-*

leries ambulantes" are carried about from one place to another, and set up beside some spring or mountain torrent. Then from the plants, brought to them immediately upon being gathered, the essential oils are distilled on the spot.

Having ordered as liberally as we dared of the "*Esprit suave de Lavande des Alpes*," of "*eau de Fleurs d'Orange*" and other sweet things, we followed a pleasant attendant, Mlle. Marie Gavarry, on a tour of the factory. We were led first of all to the refectory of the old convent, a long, dim room, with walls of rough stone, and a smoky beamed chimney. Long tables extended in rows through the entire length, and at these tables sat a hundred women and girls, busily at work. The tables and the floor surrounding them were piled to the depth of several feet with stemless pink roses of a penetrating fragrance. The contrast between the sea of rosy bloom and the rough gray walls and dark ceiling, made an extraordinary scene.

The "*triage des roses*," as the work is called which was then going on before us, consists in removing the pistil from the blossoms, as by this means a purer perfume is obtained than if it remains. In another room of equal size, a company of workers were performing the same task in white. Here, on tables and floor and from great

overflowing baskets, were masses of orange blossoms, pale, waxen, exquisite, but torn from leaf and stem, and become a commodity, rather than a flower.

Next we visited the laboratory of the *Bains-Maries*, where *enfleurage* or maceration takes place. This is the next step after the *triage*. Here we found brick furnaces, with low fires over which were placed great cans of melting fat, each stirred by a wooden mixer in the hands of a woman. This fat was full of blossoms, either of orange or rose, according to the department. Fresh flowers are continually added until the requisite strength is gained. The process requires from twelve to fifty hours. After the fat (it is taken from either pork or beef suet) has absorbed the full amount of perfume required, it is sometimes mixed with alcohol in other pans and the perfume drawn off in the shape of essence, or attar. Otherwise the fat, which is the foundation of all the costliest perfumes, after being thoroughly purified, is sold to the manufacturers as the raw material of their trade.

We found the use of fat with these delicate flowers repulsive and so expressed ourselves to Mlle. Gavarry, as we watched the curious combination of lard and orange blossoms. She smiled demurely, being evidently well wonted to this

species of criticism, and explained that formerly the flowers were mixed only with water, but in time the extraordinary affinity of animal fat for odours was discovered and a revolution was effected, resulting in enormous strengthening and saving of the precious aromas. Further she told us that the " maceration " was not by any means the only method employed; and showed us great alembics in which distillation takes place.

In other rooms we saw hydraulic presses which wring the fragrance from certain flowers rich in oil by nature. Another process, which we could not fully see because it is used chiefly for violets, jasmines and tuberoses, then out of season, is known as *l'enfleurage à froid*. Our guide showed us endless numbers of frames enclosing squares of glass used in this process, but now empty. When in use the glass is coated lightly with cold grease and then thickly sprinkled with violets, or whatever flower is used, *face downward*. The frames are made air-tight; the flowers are changed twice a day and often for three months before sufficient fragrance is absorbed. In the end the glass is heated and the precious pomade collected for export. We ceased to wonder that the genuine French perfumes are costly, when we saw the costly processes by which they are obtained. Hundreds of pounds of blossoms are required, and

TRIAGE OF ROSES.

the labour of hundreds of people, to obtain a single gill of the essential oil of rose or jasmine or violet.

We brought away a flask of the precious rose attar, hardly an inch long, for which we paid many francs, and left behind the delusion that one must go to the Orient for this costly oil. On the contrary, Eastern perfumers now come to Southern France, especially to Grasse, to obtain their attar, which they dilute, seal in the luxurious looking little gilded, slender flasks, and sell to the uninitiated as odours of Arabia. We saw huge cases standing ready to be sent away, marked Calcutta.

Having examined the different processes employed in the Bruno Court establishment we came back and Mlle. Gavarry allowed us again to linger in the great refectory, where the avalanches of roses from great canvas sacks, emptied by stout young workmen, heaped the rosy drifts ever higher and higher around and upon the tables.

"What is the name of this rose?" I asked. "It has the most marvellous fragrance."

"*La rose du Mai, Madame,*" was the answer. "Some call it the muscadine. It alone gives the proper perfume. This is the height of its season."

M'sieur and I smiled to each other. We had seen the *rose du Mai*, then, and inhaled its fragrance. I took one flower from a drift piled more

than knee deep all around me, and folded it within my handkerchief, desiring to keep as long as might be its precious elusive breath of the May and the Midi. Then, reluctantly, we said good-bye to kind Mlle. Gavarry and departed from Our Lady of Flowers.

CHAPTER XI

VILLA PRIMAVERA

IT was a glorious morning after showers when we left Grasse behind and set out in a capacious carriage for Vence. Miss S—, our guide, philosopher and friend, sat beside me and in her quiet, yet enthusiastic fashion illuminated every mile of the way. We needed many explanations, all being strange and novel, for we were entering a new land of enchantment, and entering it at its crown and top of beauty.

The road, passing the Anglican Chapel, struck a northeasterly direction, and speedily brought us into a rugged mountain region. Below the road, in its ravine, ran the torrent, Le Loup, crossed frequently by tall and graceful viaducts, within whose arches would be framed panels of magnificent purple mountains or of blossoming orchards. Always the *Ligne du Sud* could be followed by the eye, either above us or below, following the stream or crossing it with what

looked like aerial leaps. We stopped a while to look at Le-Bar-sur-Loup, a grey, weather-beaten village built on a hill. This was our first sight of the ancient villages peculiar to the Maritime Alps, which add infinitely to the charm of the mountain scenery, and which, in many cases, dominate the landscape from afar, having, in some conditions of the atmosphere, almost the aspect of a city let down from above.

Not long after we had passed Le Bar the road, turning sharply, brought us in sight of the most superb piece of engineering we have seen in France, short of the work of Roman hands, the Pont-du-Loup. At this point the rocky mountain walls part to form a deep cañon known as the Gorge du Loup, and from the one mountain side to the opposite is thrown this mighty, seven-arched viaduct. Between the bases of the piers roared Le Loup, vividly green, foam-whitened. Above, at the left, hanging awesomely over the picture, rose the walls of Gourdon.

"You have seen this before," commented M'sieur, looking at me with a quizzical smile in his eyes. For a moment I was at a loss for his meaning, then, as we drove on under the frowning and castled crags, I exclaimed:

"*Naturellement!* This is the Gorge du Loup; and that little white hotel down yonder must have

been the habitation of our friends, the Mathers. How fascinating to find ourselves following in their tracks! Which way, I wonder, may be Montaud Manor?"

Miss S—, having no acquaintance in this immediate neighbourhood, could shed no light; our *cocher* was inclined to think that the estate of M. Montaud lay a long way behind us and out of sight of the main road.

"Yes, you remember," said M'sieur, "that when the Mathers drove to the manor house from the Gorge du Loup, they passed Le Bar? That was doubtless the nearest point that we shall reach to the heart of their story."

"This grows more and more fascinating!" I cried, not a little excited by all that I recalled of *La Rose du Mai* and all that I saw around me. For the landscape grew more radiantly beautiful as we went on, with ever-recurring glimpses of the sea, wild broom covering the mountain sides with sheets of gold, and the air more delectably laden with perfume the farther we advanced.

"We are coming now into the region of the flower farms," explained Miss S—. Pointing to a terraced olive orchard, she called our attention to numberless long-drawn lines of low, vividly green violet plants.

"All the way to Vence from here," she commented, "the violets of Parma are grown in enormous quantities. But the flowers are now entirely past. They bloom in March you see, while there is sometimes snow about them."

But now we began to see the vast stretches of orange orchard, recognized instantly from the description given by Miss Mathers. Every tree was surrounded by the pickers, girls and men, perched on their low ladders, busily gathering the severed, single blossoms into bags hung at their waists, singing as they worked. Trucks, laden with large sacks full of the fragrant harvest, passed us continually, on their way to Grasse, and donkeys, their panniers heavy with rose petals and orange blossoms, plodded stolidly in the same direction, as unexcited as though they had been laden with plaster or sand.

Tourettes presently sprang into sight, perched on a narrow ridge of rock, romantic, massive, "too picturesque to be real," was my verdict. It was still a long way off, however, and the road, as we proceeded eastward, became fairly lined with fields, banks and terraced gardens, overflowing with glorious great tea roses, unfenced and unprotected. I could hardly have resisted the impulse to spring from the carriage and gather

a handful had I not recalled the fortune which befell Rose Mathers when she yielded to a like impulse.

"I never touch one of these roses," remarked Miss S—, "even when they grow on the ground of my good friends in Vence, because I am most desirous that the people of Provence shall not suspect Anglo-Saxons of being lawless or unscrupulous. The Provençals themselves strictly respect each other's property, even to so small a matter as a few flowers."

"But they do not seem to gather these splendid roses at all," I replied. "You can see they are simply left by the million here to wither on their stalks. I should suppose it would be much better for the bushes if they were cut. Are they used for perfume? They are too magnificent to be boiled up in those pans of fat we saw yesterday in the Bruno Court."

"No, these roses are not grown for perfume-making," Miss S— explained. "They are sent to the florists and the flower markets of St. Petersburg, Paris, Berlin, all over the continent, in fact, in the winter. After this time of year they are not in demand and would not pay for shipping, so they are left, as you see."

"Then I should think the owners would thank people to cut them and take them away," I

argued, still unreconciled to the seeming niggardliness underlying the seeming generosity.

"The reason that the roses are not cut at this season," replied our patient mentor, "is that cutting makes new bloom. The method is to leave the bushes passive, unproductive of flowers, until cold weather comes again. If the roses are picked now, the plants will blossom again before the markets are ready, and then they will quit work, so to speak, for months. They only blossom three times a year, you see."

"The explanation explains," quoth M'sieur, "and we must learn to 'name the birds without a gun' according to Emerson's wise prescription. Isn't it enough, Madame, to see and smell? Must you handle and touch and appropriate also?"

"No, I will try not to be a child," I retorted, "but it is a temptation, I confess. I fear with me the *ewige Kindschaft der Seele* remains uncurable."

A new turn in the road, bringing into view a far flung coast line to the west, — the Cap d'Antibes and even the Esterels added to the picture, — drew from M'sieur the remark that he believed this drive was even more beautiful than that of the Grande-Corniche.

"It is less sternly imposing, less awe-inspiring, but far lovelier," I agreed.

Reaching Tourettes we all left the carriage to

THE APPROACH TO VENCE.

explore for a few moments the strange, rock-hewn dwellings. They reminded us of our ideas of the abodes of cliff dwellers in their primitive rudeness and simplicity. But we saw tidy old women sitting spinning in the sun by the open doorways; and young girls, with cheerful faces, gave us a bright rejoinder to our greetings, as if to be a resident of Tourettes meant peace and satisfaction.

It was noon when we came under the shadow of the three huge crags, called Baous, which preside over the walled town of Vence, Pro-vence: the Baou Blanc, Baou Noir and Baou St. Jeannet.

"Do you remember the first lines of the tenth canto of Mireille?" I asked. As the others confessed ignorance, I quoted the Provençal version:

> "'*Desempièi Arle jusqu'à Vènço*
> *Escoutas-me, gènt de Provènço!*'
>
> "All the way from Arles to Vence,
> Listen to me, folk of Provence!

being interpreted," I added. "Here we are, for a fact, come all the way from Arles to Vence! And what if we had never known enough to come!"

"As we surely should not have known had it not been for our Lady of Flowers," added M'sieur,

bowing to Miss S—. I applauded his speech, for to us our dear English lady seems much better to deserve the title than the Bruno Court factory which appropriates it; and our Lady of Flowers and all other things pure and sweet she has remained.

"If you have come from Arles to Vence, you surely have crossed the whole of old Provence, from east to west. I suppose that is the significance of those lines from the Miréio."

Thus Miss S— and M'sieur had out his maps on the instant and I was left to attend to the landscape for a few moments while they deciphered the limits of old Provence, according to the partition of 1789. The province then comprised what might have been called the Land of the Three Rivers, being the region bounded on the west by the Rhone; on the north, in part, by the Durance; and on the east by the Var, which last named river, until the annexation of Nice, formed the boundary of France. It flows into the Mediterranean at St. Laurent-du-Var, six miles west of Nice, coming down from the high Alps.

"Actually, there is no Provence in these days," said M'sieur, a shade regretfully. "It has been divided, if one includes Nice, into the Departments of the Alpes Maritimes, the Basses Alpes, Var and the Bouches-du-Rhone."

"Grasse and Vence are in the Department of the Alpes Maritimes, technically," added Miss S—. "But I prefer to think of them as in old Provence, the *Provincia* of the Romans."

"Which they are in reality!" I exclaimed. "But see that fine church tower above those terraces; is that in Vence, Miss S—?"

"Yes, that is the cathedral," was the reply, and a heightened colour betrayed our lady's joy in the beauty of the approach to her chosen home.

We were passing between stately ranks of old olives and gigantic eucalyptus trees; red roofs showed through the silvery foliage, other towers pierced their way to stand up against the sky, moss-grown and venerable. All around lay flowery meads, verdant fields and orchards, and over all, in the noon stillness, brooded the three patron saints of Vence, the great Baous.

We saw at once that Vence, "within the walls," is hoary, dim and grey, the typical mediaeval town of the Midi; while "without the walls" it is a place of fresh coloured villas with gay gardens and shady avenues; a scene *riante et coquette* in the beloved vernacular of the local guides. Vence is becoming a favourite refuge for invalids from the Riviera, who find the immediate neighbourhood of the sea over-stimulating. It

suits especially those afflicted with insomnia and other nervous disorders; its equable climate and freedom from the *mistral* which besets the Riviera so persistently, imparting a tranquillizing effect, while the richness of vegetation and of flowers far exceeds that of the most famous resorts of the seaboard. All about us we saw already signs of the effort to make the little mountain town livable and attractive.

Soon we drove, at our Lady's direction, through wide open gates, into *La Domaine de la Conque*, as a crescent-shaped sign-board over the gateway announced to us. At our right a row of villas, tastefully decorated in the Riviera fashion, stood amid gardens of palms and roses. On our left, across the driveway, groves and vineyards surrounded a large white house, which, we were told, was the *Hotel de le Conque*.

The horses drew up now before a villa indicated by Miss S—. Pursuant to her cordial invitation, we entered the house, bidding the *cocher* take care of himself until four o'clock, when we should return to the hotel in Grasse for the night. We found Villa Marie full of that indefinable grace of life which no one so well knows how to impart to a home interior as a cultured Englishwoman. This was the home, not the stopping place, of our Lady of Flowers, and both within and without

she had put her own impress upon it. The exquisite order and shining cleanliness; the grace with which flowers were everywhere arranged; the books; the dainty feminine belongings; the pictures "fit and few," including notable family portraits of representatives of one of England's honoured families; everywhere the touch of art and refinement, made Villa Marie a joy to us, so long accustomed to the French hotel interior.

Luncheon over, M'sieur and I started out on a little round of exploration, mildly stimulated, I think, both of us, with the novel beauty of our surroundings and with the superb coffee served us by Miss S—'s cook. The lane of the villas, curving, passed between a fine bit of chestnut wood and a vineyard, and brought us out before the façade of the pleasant Hotel de la Conque. The owner, M. Maurel, owns also the villas all, and the large flower farm in the midst of which hotel and villas alike are placed. Standing now in the shade of honey locust trees which shut in the hotel from the heat of the meridional sun, we looked about us with wonder and delight. On every side stretched illimitable rose-gardens, dazzling in their profusion of bloom. A path bordered by tall network supporting climbing roses, heavy with their great sprays of crimson and white blossoms, led down through the Domaine de la

Conque to the village street "without the walls." Beyond the far borders of the rose field, looking in the opposite direction, dark, glossy foliage of a vast orange-orchard made background. The light breeze came to us, straight from the sea, six miles away, rich with perfume, blending with the breath of the roses and locust blossoms to a Hallelujah Chorus of sweet odours. Mountain air and ocean air thrilled together in ecstasy at the moment.

We went into the hotel; met Madame Maurel; found house and hostess agreeable; looked then at each other with significant glances, and, excusing ourselves, strolled out again through ranks of roses, roses of colours, such as we had never seen before. We voiced then the question only looked before:

"Why should we not?"

We had had various plans, including a week or two in Savoy, before moving on west to the Pyrenees for the hot weather. But could Savoy rival the charms of this *entourage?* Impossible! It was far to seek, moreover, and we were tired of travel and of change. Here, if ever, lotus eating would be pardonable, and, how delicious!

"But if I stay here," I concluded, after we had held brief conference, "I want to live in one of those villas like our Lady's. I am so tired

of hotels! I want flowers of my own, and a little tiled salon, and nobody but ourselves around. Do you suppose it possible that M. Maurel would rent us a villa for, say two weeks? "

He is coming down from the hotel now," said M'sieur, " I will ask him. I understand you authorize me to take a furnished house on the spot for two weeks, — if I can."

The result of our conferring with M. Maurel was that in fifteen minutes we were being conducted through the villa next to that of Miss S—, which was furnished and ready for occupancy, rented moreover, for the summer, but untenanted for the next two weeks; and that half an hour later, in the drawing-room of the Villa Marie, we were discussing with our lady the astonishing turn we had just given our own wheel. We would drive back to Grasse in an hour, as planned, and next morning would travel by rail to Cannes (Căn); thence eight miles to Cagnes (Kahn-yeh), where M. Maurel would have a carriage in waiting to bring us and our luggage back hither to " our own hired house." Which house, dainty and fresh in white with touches of blue, we christened Villa Primavera on the moment, and in which we expected to find a home for one blissful fortnight.

When we got back to our books we were surprised to find that other folk had discovered and raved over Vence before ourselves. We felt as if it were a finding quite our own, so wholly had *we* been in ignorance of its existence until meeting Miss S—. But Gordon Home says: "Vence is a town rich in memories, and being set in beautiful scenery, only about six miles from the sea, is a place to stay in for weeks rather than hours. There is a good hotel in a healthy position, having wide views from its windows and garden. Vence retains many remains of its mediaeval greatness. There are square towers on the walls by the gates, dating from the eleventh century. . . . Further evidence of the importance of Vence is given in the ex-cathedral and the fact of the establishing of a bishopric in the fourth century. . . . There are ample evidences to prove the very great importance of the place in Roman times . . . inscriptions showing that it had a forum, aqueducts, temples, palaces. . . . The origin of Vence is somewhere back in the shadowy ages when the Mediterranean races were peopling the favourable spots on the northwestern shores of the *Mare Internum*."

Also the author of Vèra devotes a long and fascinating chapter to the noble old Vençois family of the Villeneuves; and to the splendid

story of the early bishops of the ancient Roman Ventium.

But I fear M'sieur and I ignominiously let slip the whole record of the acts of Vence and all that it did in the past centuries, and its might and how it warred and how it recovered much glory, soon to lose it again. We were so lapped in the luxury of a fireside of our own, of really-and-truly neighbours, of a household to rule over and a personal and particular kitchen where we could make our own coffee, *sans* chicory, every morning, that the annals of old Vence went by the board.

Behold us, then, in Villa Primavera on our fifth afternoon as householders of Vence, feeling ourselves " fellow-citizens " through and through! The day is rainy and towards five o'clock we fancy the salon chilly, with its three tall casements, against which the dripping roses nod. Glad of an excuse, we kindle a fire of olive wood in the open grate. It blazes away with a will. On the mantel above stand great jars of roses and carnations, with framed photographs of dear faces across the sea between; the red tiles of the floor are spotless and reflect the firelight on their shining surface, except where covered by a rug, in the centre of which stands our " library table " (also our breakfast table), richly crowded with books, our own and the lending of Vençois neigh-

bours. I am seated at a writing desk at the right of the fire, — my desk this, with all my small treasures in order due, and on its shelf is a clear glass vase of bee orchids. M'sieur, book in hand, is perfectly happy in a *chaise longue* at the opposite ingle corner. The beautiful old carved oak buffet shows a fair array of glass and porcelain, flanked by enormous bowls of orange blossoms and white marguerites. Firelight, fragrance, home faces, books, little touches here and there, make the place live, and so says the mistress of the far lovelier Villa Marie, coming presently, as we hoped, to have tea with us. Then appears with broadly smiling face our good Claudine, an Italian woman from the town, commissioned by M. Maurel to take care of us at any time and every from morning till night. She brings in the tray with the Chinese tea-basket, the fresh, pungent-smelling lemon, and the *chef d'œuvre* of the Vençois baker, a *brioche aux sultanas*, baked in a long delicious brown loaf to our order a few hours ago, and really better than anything! Except the fresh strawberries in a white willow basket, which Miss S— has quietly left with Claudine.

Besides these our Lady brings us a new book on the Trianon, the pleasantly thrilling ghost story of Marie Antoinette, told with much con-

vincing verisimilitude by two learned ladies of Cambridge. We discuss it with wonder and glee; we look at certain charming water colours of Vence and its surrounding valleys and villages done by Miss Meyrick, of the "other" hotel; we chat about our neighbours; we even discuss the unusually rich harvest of *la rose du Mai*, now at its height, and are all gently pleased that the perfume most precious is hid in the heart of the plain little pink muscadine, instead of in those wonderful, bowl-big, golden and crimson heads, which queen it along our villa palings. Also M'sieur is for drawing a parable from the fact that it is the Bigarrade or bitter orange which yields the *neroli*, that sweetest and costliest essence. And so we comfortably and leisurely discuss mutual interests and concerns.

In short, we are at home!

I know this farther, for a fact, when, Claudine leaving early, I go to the kitchen before the hour comes to cross to the hotel for dinner, and wash my own delicate tea-cups, and my own silver spoons, and feel housewifely and important. We know it when we go up by the winding white marble stair to the chambers and luxuriate in three goodly rooms thrown together, their windows overlooking gardens of olives, of roses, of almonds and of orange and lemon trees in a

world of wonder ending only with that line of silver which is the sea.

And when night comes, and the tall casements are thrown wide, the persiennes lifted, and the air about us thrills with the flood of melody poured out by nightingales, in the thicket behind the villa, I call out to M'sieur, exulting:

"Those are our nightingales!"

And M'sieur calls back:

"Are those seventeen turquoise blue china balls under the eaves ours also? Because, if they are, I shall put them in my trunk and take them home with me."

Whereupon I retort that he shall not make fun of my beloved blue decorations.

Villa Primavera's white walls are gay with porcelain balustrades and balls in this vivid hue, set off by a white cornice of acanthus leaves in low relief. A tiled porch, white marble steps and a neat marquise give comely entrance from the garden path between its rows of tangerine trees, its palms and roses.

The Hotel de la Conque is a small mountain hotel, well kept as French hotels go, of moderate price and pretensions. It does not, I think, advertise *derniers conforts* with the urgent emphasis of houses along the Riviera; but we found in Villa Primavera, with all its simplicity, far more

of what we consider *derniers conforts* than in any hotel of Provence. This was probably largely owing to a trick of temperament, for, I hesitate to confess there was not a proper American bath tub in the Villa and no running water on the second floor. However, the life suited us. For the benefit of any reader of kindred taste I will volunteer the fact that the expense of living thus detached, taking our meals at the hotel, with the exception of breakfast (which was brought across the vineyard to us), was the same as if we had had rooms in the hotel. One trifling extra, I should add, is that of Claudine's microscopic stipend. I believe, however, that M. Maurel may have made us a special rate on account of our taking the Villa at a time when he could not have expected any return for it.

Monsieur and Madame Maurel were obliging and attentive to their guests, and either within the hotel or without, those who find entertainment on the *Domaine de la Conque* have reason to congratulate themselves. I shall sometime, I hope, have reason to congratulate myself that the master of the house has awakened to the perception that a freer hand with his endless wealth of flowers will bring him many more and more enthusiastic guests. The rule of the domain in our sojourn there was that no person but the master himself,

or a servant commissioned by him, must ever pluck a flower. Here speaks the hard-handed thrift of the born Provençal! One who knows them well says:

"With the most passionate ideal of personal liberty, the peasantry of the Maritime Alps are marked enemies to progress. All Provençals would gladly find themselves richer, but present outlay costs them such a pang that they prefer to slumber on in old world lethargy. They are at once passionate and wary, avaricious, and yet fond of holiday cavalcades, impatient of control and unapt to change. They like a prohibitive tariff, they consider every advantage given to strangers as a positive injury to themselves and they decline to alter their old methods of dealing with their own property."

To this not altogether pleasing character sketch another has added the touch that the Vençois tradespeople are so jealous and so resentful that they have to be handled with wearisome *finesse* or one has them for permanent enemies. Alas, that even in this paradise one must strike the trail of the serpent! One could almost take to sermonizing!

In Vence, however, one must, on the contrary, take to walking and that right early and right often, for two weeks are quite insufficient for the

excursions into the surrounding country, too wonderful to lose. A favourite walk of ours was through the mediaeval portion of the town, up and out beyond the walls to a grassy common, the Place St. Michel, surrounding an odd little dismantled chapel. Here we liked to sit with the sheep cropping peacefully around us and a lovely, if limited, prospect spread before our eyes. After resting here we were wont to strike off into the country along a distinct ridge leading out to a steep cliff-end, whence the view over the snow-clad Alps and the Mediterranean, with the Cap d'Antibes cutting the blue like a gigantic scythe, was a joy. And all the way the path led through sweet scented fields and orchards, and everywhere we could watch the peasant folk gathering their roses and their orange flowers by the bushel, tying them up in bags, loading them on the backs of their donkeys, or upon small hand carts, and turning, as the sun sank low, back towards Vence with their fragrant burdens.

If we followed these labourers within the walls of the town we would find them repairing to an establishment where their flowers were inspected, weighed, paid for, and then poured out upon great linen sheets, with millions of their kind. The mass of rose or ivory hue accumulated to incredible depths as the evening hours advanced

and the workers crowded home. By night the day's yield, packed again into bags, would be loaded upon great wagons and transported the twenty kilomètres to Grasse, to one or another of its nearly fifty *parfumeries*.

Once as we passed it, M'sieur left me alone that I might seek admittance at the old convent, now known as the *Pension des Dames de Nevers*. Going once I was fain to go again, for never was sweeter soul then *chère Mère*, and her quaintly ordered garden and spotless house gave her perfect setting. If I were alone in the world and *chère Mère* still ruled her little world of most other-worldly peace, I should flee to it as to a heavenly haven of rest.

Another short walk took us with some climbing up to the fine ruins of the great Commandery of the Knights Templars, who were once mighty lords in Provence, with this for a seat of power.

Here was a glorious view, as also from the Calvary on its low hill, approached by ten chapels bearing curious sixteenth century sculptures of the Stations of the Via Dolorosa. There is much in Vence of mediaeval memory, much to stir the imagination and set one a-dreaming as one wanders about its walls or farther a-field. Quaint little wayside chapels and shrines set amid hoary olives; beautiful old belfries; shrines of Penitents,

ST. PAUL-DU-VAR, MEYRICK.

white, blue or gray; carved *misérérés* in the ex-cathedral choir; deep, vaulted passages, leading from one fantastic old street to another; remnants of the Chateau of the "high and puissant" Counts of Vence; picturesque markets and more picturesque fountains in the market places, these phrases may suggest how endlessly suggestive is Vence to artist, dreamer or poet.

Once and yet again we drove to St. Paul-du Var, a gem of a perfectly fortified hill town, less than three miles from Vence. A city set on a hill that cannot be hid we found, with a triple gateway most effectually protected by its construction from attack. The masonry of the walls stands intact to-day, as when built in the fifteenth century. Within were streets incredible for picturesqueness, and a few quiet, contented women folk with their knitting or spinning. It was a plunge back into the Middle Ages to pass that triple portal. We walked the entire *enceinte* of the walls, looking down into the luxuriant gardens which lie just outside and below them. The whole region surrounding St. Paul is one gorgeous garden of orange, peach, fig, almond and lemon trees; of violets, roses and carnations, with here and there a screen of tall cypresses or a gaunt crucifix rising from the wayside to give accent to the picture which might otherwise sink into

softness. But St. Paul-du Var itself, founded upon its rock, abides stern, impregnable, yet beautiful withal, — a name to conjure by to those who have once beheld it.

The wonderful Alpine drive from Vence to Le Broc we took on the last day before we came away. Leaving the town by the St. Jeannet road, we passed under the huge Baou of that name, at whose base lies the isolated village of St. Jeannet. Gattières, at a great height overlooking the bed of the Var, frowned down upon us, while all around us smiled a wilderness of wild flowers, eglantine, wild gladiolus, coronilla and many more. Suddenly, among cloud shadows and almost among the clouds, there appeared rising from a billowy mass of olive foliage the "castled crag" of Carros, — a vision rather than a reality, its towers and castle suffused with violet mists. As we drove on toward Le Broc, our journey's end, our breath was almost taken away by the glorious surging up beyond the Var of range upon range of Alpine peaks. Some were snowy, others gray, but all, under the gloom of passing thunder clouds which clung about their heads, seemed to us like apparitions.

I find one man, and he the cold-blooded Augustus Hare, who names the scenery on this drive "perfectly sublime in its beauty." And how long

it takes the traveller, bored to extinction by the banalities of Nice and of Monte Carlo, to discover, just above them, these divine glories of the Midi, the Maritime Alps!

But, meanwhile, other mountains of the Midi beckoned us and held us when we were tempted, almost irresistibly, to give up, not Savoy only, but all of the rest of our planned pilgrimage, for this land of flowers. Beyond the sea the Pyrenees! Books, charts and plans of travel were studied at Villa Primavera; letters written and received from diverse mountain stations. There lay before us the tripartite division of the great range: the Catalan, east; the Béarnais, for centre; the Basque, toward the far Atlantic shore. We chose Catalonia, the modern department of the *Pyrénées Orientales*, to begin with, and Le Vernet, beloved of Rudyard Kipling and other wise men, for first abode.

CHAPTER XII

BEYOND THE PLAIN OF ROUSSILLON

" Au pied du haut Canigou
S'étend un pays embaumé
Qui s'appelle Roussillon:
C'est notre pays bien aimé, —
Oh bien aimé!

" Chantons, jeunes et vieux;
Chantons le Canigou,
Le frais et riant pays du Canigou."
— Catalan Old Song.

UNDER date of the fifteenth day of June I find pencilled in my notebook the following impromptu sketch:

" We are seated on a great rock outjutting over the swift onrush of the Cadi torrent. I am facing up-stream. The river's roar drowns talk and the books we have brought with us lie beside us unread; the hour and the place are too mighty; men's words seem an intrusion, an impertinence. Between us and the boundary wall, beyond which passes the road, is a stretch of deep grass, thick sown with clover and buttercups. Beyond the road great purple crags over-

hang a narrow strip of high meadow, where women are making hay. But I am looking straight up the Cadi into the recesses of the mighty outriders of the Canigou. Light veils of mist conceal the majesty of the Canigou itself; but as they drift apart and then again together, the long lines of snow against the black ramparts can be discerned.

"To the right of the Canigou rise lesser peaks of wild grace and rugged symmetry. Above bends a sky serenely blue, flecked with white cirrus clouds. From a wilderness of oak, pine and beech, down to the rock where we recline, flashes and flows, dashes, pours and breaks into a thousand small cascades, the loud and joyous mountain child, the Cadi, clear as crystal and of that glacial green which only snow mountains produce. The quality of the air is glorious; cool, vital, thrilling with energy; no heat save the sun's direct rays and at no time sultriness. Birds and butterflies are holding high carnival in the tree tops and over the aromatic, sun-warmed herbage of the lower slopes. The place is full of music, of radiant light, of solemn joy, of worship. The sternness of the mighty mountain shapes, the tenderness of the sky and its clouds, the gladness of the river, fill me with a sense of the love and power encompassing our frail human life; a sense which drives

tears to my eyes, from the depth of a divine — not 'despair,' but *recognition*, recognition of the oneness of one's self with the life of Nature and the life of God."

From these notes it will be seen that, Vence sorrowfully left behind us, we have traversed Provence, Languedoc and the rich plain of ancient Roussillon; that we came by Marseilles, Nimes, Montpellier, Beziers, Cette and Narbonne, even to quaintly Spanish Perpignan, under the shadow of Mont Canigou. Thence, we had a short rail-road journey to one of the dozen *Villefranches* of the Midi, — this one having *Conflent* for surname, — and on by carriage three miles to Le Vernet, or Vernet-les-Bains.

This route is too long for a single day. We spent the night of the day on which we left Vence in Nimes. Starting thence at nine in the morning, we reached Le Vernet at five o'clock, not at all the worse for wear. A carriage had been sent to Villefranche for us by M. Émile Kiechle, Director-General of all Vernet, which is a thermal station of ancient fame. On descending from our carriage before a small official building set just beyond a bridge over the roaring Cadi, we were welcomed with kindly hospitality by the Director himself, a cosmopolitan *par excellence*, a man of spirit, humour, fine perception and charm. We

were fortunate in having especial introduction, and at once, with that auspicious sense of heart-warming which certain persons infuse in one at the first encounter, we knew ourselves *at home* in Le Vernet.

M. Émile (he is always thus affectionately styled at the *établissement*) pointed out the half dozen hotels distributed along the upper level of the village street or set in splendid parks. Only three of the houses were open now, this being "between seasons;" but of Hotel du Parc, Hotel Ibrahim Pacha and Hotel Mercader, we were bidden to take our choice. We were then given into the hands of the several hotel managers and ere long found ourselves happily established in an immaculate chamber in the Mercader. And in this abode we found a month all too short — a month in which we and a small group of English folk of light and leading made a congenial and harmonious family.

Those fellow guests of ours must have been original and adventurous souls, for the great conventional colony of English leave Vernet automatically, it would seem, at Easter. Automatically, I say, because May and June are the loveliest of all months there. But it is for their gout, as well as for its natural beauties, that the English come to Vernet, and, I suppose, by Easter their

courses of treatment are accomplished, as they begin coming in October. The French and Spanish contingent arrive in crowds for their season, from Perpignan, Narbonne, Toulouse, Barcelona, Saragossa, in July. The English choose Vernet, climate-wise, because the winter is mild and dry; the Latins because the summer is cool and bracing; both, because of its marvellous healing springs. Why should not Americans, of whom we found ourselves apparently pioneers, claim the glories of May and June, the high-tide of the year, for our season, and also mark Vernet for our own? After searching the Pyrenees *hautes*, Pyrenees *basses*, and Pyrenees *Orientales*, we give the palm, for sheer delight of life, to this jewel of the Canigou, the ancient heritage of the Counts of Vernet.

The *chateau-fort* of these *grands seigneurs* of the ninth century rises proudly from the roofs of "old Vernet," the village on the hill below, which we passed on our arrival. The valley road leads by the Cadi on to "new Vernet," — the cluster of hotels and baths set in beautiful gardens. Old Vernet may count for little else in the life of the sojourner at the Baths, but it is invaluable as a stage property, being picturesque to a degree, and its restored *chateau-fort* a commanding feature in the landscape.

OLD VERNET.

Vernet lies a full degree farther south than Nice; its foliage is richly sub-tropic, but the bracing mountain air and the altitude of twenty-two hundred feet, keep it from an extreme temperature, and we found relief entire from the *mistral* and from the relaxing heat of the *Côte d'Azur*. It is a *quatre saisons* health resort. The atmosphere seems charged the year around with some subtle, life-giving properties. Sleep, we found, came naturally in the stillness of the June nights, broken only by the trills of nightingales and the music of the Cadi. "Go where you will," writes Miss Towgood, an ardent lover of Vernet, "one sound meets your ears. Deep in the valleys, high on the hills, — a ripple, a gurgle, a soft splashing, a full volumed roar, — always you hear the mountain's music, the noise of running water."

And despite the sternness of the Canigou, "guarded by fearful slopes, with deep defiles, awesome chasms, boisterous torrents which hurl themselves in foam through precipitous channels," one misses nothing here of the rich flora of the *Côte d'Azur*; for palms, oleanders, figs and mimosa, clematis and pomegranate flourish all the year and the Roussillon is an endless orchard of muscatel, peach, almond and olive, where it is not one continuous vineyard.

We found much of Vernet's attractiveness in its seclusion from the great high roads and the throngs of tourists and pleasure-seekers. The contrast with the Riviera resorts is delightful, as also with the crowded conventionalities of Cauterets, Luchon, Bigorre. Vernet still retains a charm long lost in these noisy centres: the charm of repose, of unspoiled grandeur, and of local colour. The road leading up to Vernet is perfect for motoring, but as cars can no farther go, the village is mercifully exempt from the noise and dust of machines tearing through to get elsewhere.

The native Catalan people are simple and kindly, and kindly retain their costumes; the men wearing corduroy jackets, full trousers gathered in at the ankle, the broad blue or red sash, the enormous sabots. The women wear full skirts, kerchiefs or fichus and a curious white cap with full, drooping crown, becoming to certain contours of face and head. When going up into the mountains men, women and children alike wear *spadrillas*, — the Pyrenean sandal of white cloth with cord sole and thongs, by which they are tied around the ankle. The Catalan water bottle of skin, which the mountaineers carry suspended over the shoulder, involves a characteristic practice. The Catalan drinks from this without muscular action of swallowing; holding the bottle up at the proper

angle, opening his mouth and allowing the water simply to pour down. Even more singular than the water flasks are found the loaves of bread "of the people." They are flat, oval in form and measure about three feet by two, with a crust inches thick. We often saw the peasant women marching, erect and smiling, up the stony paths to their homes in the mountain, with three of these mammoth loaves piled on their heads and one under each arm.

Striking are the contrasts on the street of Vernet! A shepherd in his blue blouse, water skin slung over his shoulder, crook in his hand, leads his flock through the village to fresh fields and pastures new, past the splendid tennis courts and the model croquet grounds of the *établissement.* (Everything in Vernet pertaining to the Baths and hotels comes under the designation of *établissement thermal et station climaterique.*) Smart pony carts with silver mounted harness jostle the yokes of enormous cream-white Catalan oxen, trudging slowly along with colossal loads of hay. Women in Parisian costume are met by picturesque caravans of veritable Spanish gypsies; the newest type of Limousine turns out to avoid the string of donkeys, "trapped and panniered as in the pages of Don Quixote;" and a fairylike fair-haired child walks beside a stately blade-

straight woman from the Atlas Mountains, coal black, a yellow silk turban on her head.

Having visited many of the Pyrenean thermal stations later in the summer, I look back with enthusiasm which grows stronger even in the retrospect, at the magnificent management of the Vernet *établissement.* Never, at home or abroad, have I known the degree of cleanliness enforced in the hotels and baths. The walls of our rooms were enamelled with a substance called *Ripolin,* as hard and shining as glass, delicately tinted and decorated. These walls were washed by hand every time the rooms changed occupants, and every nook and corner was kept as clean as a teacup. Good taste pervades all parts of the *établissement* and gives the sense of aesthetic satisfaction so often missed by us in the Midi.

But the *ne plus ultra* of radiant cleanliness was to be found in the baths of our hotel. They are arranged in a three-storied building, approached from the hotel corridors, lined from bottom to top and over and under with gleaming white tiles. An open metal staircase and galleries, all snowy white, connect the different *étages.* From these galleries open the bath-rooms, rest-rooms, etc., all equipped with strictest eye to hygienic demands.

The baths are luxuriously comfortable, and

while all kinds known to science are given at Vernet, the simple immersion in the sulphur water which flows, an inexhaustible, boiling hot, subterranean river, under the village, is an experience to covet often and remember long. Towels *ad infinitum* are furnished, and for each fresh bath one is given a fresh life-sized *peignoir* of white Turkish towelling, scented with the sweet mountain air in which it has been a-drying. They are prodigal of comforts like these at Vernet. Indeed everywhere there reigns a spirit of liberality and of lavish kindliness. We used to look back wistfully on the narrow thrift which ruled in beautiful Provence and M'sieur concluded that the nearer we came to Spain the gentler we found the minds of men.

With this, however, I am not inclined surely to agree, for nowhere else along the Spanish border did we find the spirit of Vernet. My own conviction is that the dynamic influence there has its source in the personality of Monsieur Émile

In the beautiful park, open to all guests, surrounded by magnolias, deodars, ilexes and laurels, stand hotels keyed for distinguished, for noble, even for royal guests, luxuriously appointed and irreproachably sustained. Around the outer confines of the park, deeply embosomed in shade, stand villas, a score or more, destined to be filled

in the high summer with French or Spanish families, in the winter with the English. Just beyond the limits of the park is the spot selected for the Anglican chapel; it is yet to be built but the corner-stone was laid by Lord Roberts during his sojourn in Vernet last spring.

In the park also is found a casino of complete equipment, possessing a very elegant little theatre. But the privilege of its library was what we prized most, there being an abundance of English books, wisely selected and generously dispensed. It was the habit of our Mercader family, whose most notable member was a London *savant*, Mr. Rojair, to visit the library in the morning and, armed with some promising volume, to stroll out through the shaded park and settle down in some green nook for an hour or two of quiet reading, while the river ran and the mountains leaned over.

It would have been easy to let all our days pass in dreamy idleness like this, but the sterner beauties of the mountains, gorges, waterfalls, challenged us to action and every day we found some new and unguessed adventure.

A drive full of interest was to the quaint little town of Py, high up in the mountains, reached through the Gorge of Sahorre. Valleys and orchards all the way were gay and overflowing with

living springs, mountain brooks and wild flowers unlimited, — poppies, honeysuckles, veronica and many others unknown to us. Py has a tenth century church, very poverty stricken, and a twentieth century curé, also very poverty stricken, because it is the twentieth century and the disruption of Church and State has robbed him of his stipend. Also this event has robbed him of the loyalty of his people, who, as he sadly told us, have quickly taken on the popular reaction against the clergy, and now turn away coldly from the Church.

We thought the church of Py the most primitive we had ever visited, with its rough hewn rock walls and floor; its everlasting light, a wick floating in an open tumbler of oil hung from a meat hook; its poor little sanctuary draped with coarse Nottingham lace. But it was easy to see that the good curé loved his humble church. Next, we found, to his heart, were his bees, whose hives were ranged along before his house and who seemed to be his friends, more faithful to him than his flock. He had honey, new made, which he was glad to sell. M'sieur irreverently remarked that as the poor man found starvation in taking orders in the Church, he was taking orders in honey to get his bread and butter.

We felt an element of pathos in the situation

as we drove away down to the material comforts and social stimulus of Vernet, leaving behind this educated, eager-hearted, saddened young curé alone with his chilly little church and his chilly parishioners.

. . . . . .

Belloc, who has written a better book on the Pyrenees than any one else, so far as I am acquainted, calls Mont Canigou "one of the most individual mountains in Europe." He says further: —

"The Canigou must be separately approached and travelled in. It dominates one particular province, and one famous plain (Roussillon) to the exclusion of every other peak, so that when you are going through the Roussillon, especially along the seacoast, the only thing you can think of is the Canigou, which seems to be as much the lonely spirit of the district as Etna of the seacoast of Sicily, or as Vesuvius, the Bay of Naples."

A canon of Perpignan describes the Canigou thus: "A grand system of mysterious forests, of profound valleys, of abysses, of rocks superimposed, of glaciers, of lakes, of cascades, of rivers, a world entire hides within its flanks. . . . It was a daring inspiration of Count Guifred to suspend an abbey half way between base and summit, between heaven and earth."

ST. MARTIN-DU-CANIGOU.

This abbey, *l'Abbaye royale de St. Martin du Canigou*, is a landmark first noticed by every traveller approaching Vernet. Rising from a bold spur of the Canigou, above Vernet, midway, as said, between base and summit, a crenelated tower, solitary and solemn, marks the ruined monastery, and its bells lend a touch of humanity to the wild austerity of the mountain side.

Who was Count Guifred? And how came he to place the Abbey of St. Martin in that awful solitude? These questions which I could not fail to ask, as soon as I had looked about me in Vernet, I found answered in part in old French chronicles, from which I translate and condense the following bit of mediaeval history:

The first mention of Vernet is found in the year 863, when the village at the foot of the colline, and the *chateau-fort* on its summit, are spoken of as properties of the Counts of Cerdagne, resident in the village of Corneilla. (This most picturesque spot is passed on the road from Villefranche to Vernet.) The chateau was known as *Castrum Vernetum*. About the year 1000 Count Guifred became heir to the "*heritage de Vernet.*" He and his wife, Guisla, were piously inclined and cherished a peculiar *penchant* for a little hermitage and chapel built long before, in honour of St. Martin, on a buttress of the Canigou. This hermitage

was the goal of many pilgrims from the Roussillon; Guifred and Guisla also made frequent pilgrimages thither and from time to time enriched it with gifts of land.

Not content with these gifts, Count Guifred conceived the idea of making of the solitary hermitage a Benedictine monastery. This he did, the first Abbot of St. Martin's being consecrated in 1014. Five years later the noble Guisla, feeling her end approaching, made her will in favour of the new foundation, and after her death Guifred's devotion grew deeper then ever. Although he married a second time and was father of seven children, the Count in the end reached the resolution of withdrawing wholly from the world. Dividing his possessions justly between his children and the Abbey, he took upon himself monastic orders in the year 1043 and was clothed by the Abbot of St. Martin's with the Benedictine habit.

During his six years of life as a monk Guifred occupied himself much in hewing a sarcophagus out of a granite block for his own burial. His death occurred in 1049.

In the following century the town of Vernet *avec ses terres et ses propriétes*, became by deed the fief of the Abbots of St. Martin, who from that period until the Revolution, figured as *Seigneurs*

of the village and *chateau-fort* of Vernet. The Baths of Vernet, first noticed in the records of the year 1181, were administered by the monks of St. Martin or by their vassals. The Baths were confiscated in 1376 by the King of Aragon, the Abbey was stormed, and the monks did homage to a master, but this was but one of the transient political shifts of a stormy time. St. Martin's remained dominant over Vernet until 1784, when it was suppressed, desecrated and given over to ruin. In the year 1902 Monseigneur de Carsalade du Pont, Bishop of Perpignan, rescued the ruins by purchase and undertook at his own personal expense their rehabiliation.

"Since that time, the Abbey, under the hand of the prelate has, little by little, risen from its ashes; the church was first restored, then the cloister, then the house of the monks, then the abbatial palace. To-day, returned to life, it opens hospitable doors to those who visit it, and the bells on its tower fill the mountains and the valley with their harmonies."

. . . . . .

Our first walk in Vernet was to follow the mountain path leading by the Cadi up to the hamlet of Casteil. Into the humble church here are built some treasures torn from the ancient monastery above in the days of its spoliation, such as

carved pillars, sculptured capitals, all showing marked Byzantine characteristics. Within is the tomb of Guifred, transferred hither by act of the "sovereign council of Roussillon," in the year 1786, the date of the secularization of the Abbey of St. Martin's. The tomb bears the figure of the Count, *en chevalier*, armed cap-a-pie, while above he was presented originally in his monkish cowl and gown. The ashes of Guifred rested in peace here for seven years but, with the advent of revolutionary frenzy, "the axe and the hammer of impiety and of irreligious rage fell upon the tomb. The sarcophagus was broken, annihilated, and by a satanic act, the ashes it contained were thrown to the winds."

We heard of other treasures stored in Casteil's church, such as an altar-cloth, embroidered by the Countess Guisla, enclosed in a costly casket bearing the coat of arms of Count Guifred, and inscribed: *Donn par la Comtesse Guisla à Saint Martin de Canigou en 1018.*" However, this interesting relic was not produced at our asking, and we feared the work of Guisla's hands might have gone the way of Guifred's ashes.

From Casteil we lifted longing eyes up to the far height where rose the tower of St. Martin's approached only by a mountain trail. Could we ever attain that height? we asked, eager and

impatient of what seemed difficulties over great.

Yes, later this was to be our good fortune, but that is another story.

CHAPTER XIII

ROUND ABOUT VERNET

ON our second Sunday morning in the Hotel Mercader, I was engaged in writing a home letter in bed, having just finished my coffee. I was in the midst of the following sentence: "Things get more adorable every hour; I feel as if I could never leave this place; the deeper I live into the glory of the mountains, the kindliness of the people," — at this point I was interrupted. M'sieur, returning from his coffee, which he scorns to take up-stairs, announced that Monsieur Êmile had planned for us to go up to St. Martin-du-Canigou for our Sabbath morning worship, if it suited us; had organized a small party of our friends for the ascent; that a carriage would be ready for the ladies at nine o'clock, and that he would ensure that the excursion should be without over strenuous effort.

"Simply think," argued M'sieur, "Lord Roberts went up to the Abbey with Mr. Kipling,

their wives and daughters, just a few weeks ago, and ' Bobs ' is eighty-four. You are not that yet."

The severity which might have marked my rejoinder was lost in my astonishment at the suggestion that a carriage could convey us up the rugged path to Casteil. But again I was put to rights by the example of the British Field Marshal. Lord Roberts, it appeared, went up to Casteil *en auto!*

With a passing pang of regret at the postponement of my hot sulphur swim, I made ready gladly, joined the others at the hotel entrance at nine and found myself half an hour later in Casteil in prime condition, despite a rough upward transit. At Casteil a donkey, named Bella, was in waiting for me, with a most appealing donkey boy, a child of eleven years. I was enthroned presently on a comfortable lambskin saddle, and our small cavalcade set out, the others on foot, for a mile and a half of sheer climbing, for the Abbey is three thousand feet above sea level, and the mountaineer's trail is the sole approach.

Up we went, the path thickly strewn with rolling stones and leading always along the edge of the awful gulf through which the Cadi, here a wild and angry sprite, tore its downward course. Bella picked her way delicately, always preferring the outward edge of the path, but restrained

by M'sieur, who interposed the substantial rampart of his person between her and that giddy verge. Wholly unable to comprehend anxiety, our infantile guide, the son of a professional *guide du Canigou*, ambled onward with childish *insouciance*, holding Bella's bridle, and giving us bits of information regarding Monseigneur who owns all, all around here on the mountain! and *mon Papa* who conducts *beaucoup, beaucoup de monde sur le Canigou, tous les étés*. Little Catalan though he was, the child spoke beautiful French and always with his engaging softness of voice and smile. Even when, on the descent the donkey was given over by me to him, and he chose to ride down the mountain backward, letting Bella pick her way unguided around the fearful windings of the path, he smiled upon our terror-stricken faces with the same angelic sweetness.

At length we came in sight of the buttressed walls and gray old tower of the Abbey, as it stands on a spur springing from the flank of the Canigou, surrounded by an amphitheatre of majestic mountain peaks piercing the blue of the June sky. The radiance and bloom of the morning rested upon the scene and the ineffable Sabbath peace was borne to us on the melodious chiming of the monastery bells above. A few more turns of the path and Bella's guide halted at a great crucifix

planted on a dizzy height, overlooking the rugged chaos of the Canigou's lower slopes, with Vernet in its valley appearing a nest for pygmies. We were at the Abbey's gates. Chapels and cloisters, cells and halls, all now in fair order, were visited, and we examined with interest the stone sarcophagus hewn for himself by the hand of Count Guifred. It lies now in a grassy court and in its concavities suggests a fantastic notion of human anatomy. We did not envy the Count the use of it as a bed at night; but then, we have never seen the advantage of the ascetic life.

The good Bishop of Perpignan, we were told, would be coming in July to the Abbey. He will remain in residence during the summer. We learned that he is a most hospitable man and has recently received a gift of 10,000 francs with which to start his favourite project of an *abri-hotel*, or species of Hospice adjacent to the Abbey, which has now become, in fact, the ecclesiastical summer palace.

We were deeply interested in the account of the imposing pilgrimage and ceremonies with which Monseigneur had marked his first taking possession of St. Martin's. A great concourse of people, massed at Vernet, with historic standards and religious emblems, had marched by the rocky mountain path which we had just now climbed,

chanting as they went the Catalan song of Our Saviour of the Canigou, to the air of *Montanya regalada*, beloved of all Roussillonais. After mass in the Abbey church, a sermon was preached by a Capuchin monk, who imagined the mighty shades of Count Guifred and the first Abbot welcoming the Lord Bishop of Perpignan, come into the wilderness to call back to life their beloved Abbey.

Later I was enabled to secure a report of the words of Monseigneur following the sermon. This prelate is, we were told, of a peculiarly winning personality and displays in a curious degree the characteristic features and gestures of the bishops of the *Moyen Age*. He is described as speaking with much emotion, saying:

"To-day God has descended upon the Canigou to sanctify it again. . . . To-day is made upon this great Catalan mountain a profession of the Catholic faith. It can never die. It takes new roots and new life upon this mountain. . . . Before I leave you I lift my consecrated hands here, in the cradle of the Catalan race, to ask of God Almighty that he will strengthen the bonds of brotherhood between the Catalans of the other side of the mountain (Spain) and you, my well-beloved sons of the Roussillon."

Later, in touching response to the Bishop's

prayer, when the festival of the *Jeux Floraux* of Barcelona was held in the nave of the church, a spontaneous antiphony broke out from the stated programme, echoing from side to side "Vive le Roussillon!" from the Spanish; "Vive Catalonia!" from the French.

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Our next adventure must be called Fairyland up to date, and true for true. Enter upon the scene of our peaceful life at Vernet a "high born Spanish man," Don Carlos by name, as knightly as Don Quixote himself, but of a more practical turn. The gentleman was born in Frankfort, educated in America, lived long in Australia, is now a resident of Barcelona and spends his summers in France. He and Monsieur Émile are good comrades.

His is the motor car which carried us, his guests, into Fairyland. I can see it now: — the Opel, — wine red within as the red wine of the Roussillon; wine gold without as the gold wine of the Roussillon, over whose storied and legend-haunted plain it bore us as on wings of wind.

Between wild grown hedgerows of eglantine and of scarlet pomegranate we sped onward, the perfume of the yellow broom enswathing us. Silent, spectral towers rose from the peaks around the valley, alternating with still and age-worn vil-

lages, while always on either side the hard, white road lay boundless vineyards and fields of grain, thick sown with poppies and corn flowers.

There came a turn from these into a stern, grim, No Man's Land of bare, rock-ribbed mountains, dread of aspect; then another turn and — Fairyland. From the floor of a valley rose an escarped rock, crowned by a magnificent fortified chateau, towering above a village of red-roofed houses. On an ivied battlement of the chateau we discerned two figures, — the castle's lord and lady. Visible for miles around, the approach to the chateau was through the ancient, feudal village. Here all the folk were making holiday, looking precisely like groups in Grand Opera; — the men with broad, coloured sashes, and velvet jackets thrown over one shoulder; the girls in Catalan caps and kerchiefs, with a suggestion of the Spanish mantilla in the transparent black head drapery. All were uncommonly clean and all the faces seemed kindly and contented. Even the motor car — so often glared at resentfully by the peasants — seemed here to arouse only friendliest feeling. Our questions as to how to gain access to the chateau were answered with gentle courtesy by the pairs of lovers who blossomed in the hedges along with the pomegranate flowers.

CATALAN CAPS.

Up and ever up we kept on our way by zig-zag approaches and at last found ourselves directly below the outworks of the castle. No modern imitation this, but the original tenth century structure, perfectly restored, where restoration has been required; made livable, but preserved intact in its primitive form.

"You see before you, Monsieur-Madame, the chateau of Castell'nou!" Don Carlos now announces, having just tucked away in his pocket a small Vidal guide. "This feudal and seignorial stronghold of the tenth century is famous for its complete annals of the *Moyen Age*, dating from the year 976 and splendidly preserved. From the year 1020 the viscounts of the chateau have played an important part in history, for this has been the seat of one of the most puissant families of the Roussillon. The line having become extinct the chateau is now the property of a young American sculptor of rising fame, William Dunbar Jewett."

By this time we have reached an iron gate set in massive masonry, but no portcullis falls, not even a guarded concierge guards the portal. Instead, the two figures, seen on the battlement from afar, stand to receive us with hospitable welcome on the threshold. Both are in their twenties and both American, and yet they make

no anachronism, so perfectly do they suit their surroundings. Our Open Sesame is a line of introduction from Monsieur Émile. Nothing more is needed.

We are conducted from one court to another, from one castellated terrace to the next, from one pleasance, one enclosed garden of roses, to the next above. There is an Italian garden with fountain and statues, vines and laurel; there is a great rampart where *chaises longues* are placed, looking down the depth, across the plain to the sea itself, a prospect of matchless beauty. Here, the chatelaine tells us, their after dinner coffee is brought them, and here they recline under the stars with all the world still and solemn around them.

From the uppermost terrace we gazed long, for the view was manifold; to the south a rugged mountain wall separated us from Spain; to the east we caught the blue of the Mediterranean; to the north and west there was unrolled before us one of the fairest landscapes of France, with the soft, historic plain of the Roussillon in the middle distance, and, on the far horizon, the purple Corbières.

We reached the chateau itself and entered the vast hall, so high that you really are not aware that it has a ceiling, and proportionately long and

wide. The great chimney seemed as large as a fair-sized room. The floor, paved with large squares of black and white marble, highly polished, reflected stately carved oak chairs, massive tables and armoires. There were deep-toned rugs; rich, sober-hued tapestries; much brown Spanish leather, and everywhere tall, branched candelabra. The chateau is lighted only by candles. The walls of the castle are seven feet in thickness, and the windows form delightful niches for a book and an idle hour. Opening the quaint casements with their shining, diamond, leaded panes, one seems to look out upon all the world.

We were soon ushered into a dining-room, hardly less imposing than the great hall, for tea. Here we sat around an old Roman table magnificently carved, its surface shining like a mirror and setting off delightfully the antique silver tea service. An ancient Delft jug held the *liqueur du Canigou,* which is the essence of all sweet, wild, bitter herbs which grow in these sweet, wild bitter Pyrenees. We seemed to drink, in some mysterious way, the distilled essence of warmth and cold, of light and darkness, of joy and terror, of sweetness and power.

We visited the studio and saw the work sent by the Master of the House to the last Salon. In all his ideal figures the young wife, with her

delicate purity of profile, her dainty grace of line and limb, serves as model. But the sculptor is gaining especial fame also by his spirited presentation of Catalan types in panels of bas-relief. Returning to the hall, I asked our fair-haired hostess the practical question:

"How do you keep warm in winter?"

"We sit *in* the fire," she replied. "We dress in corduroy and furs, and, — we don't keep warm!"

What do they do for society was another question. They never lack, it seems. They have charming relations with all the chateau people through the country side, and with a congenial circle in Perpignan. There are continual *cotillons*, *bals masques* and week-end parties; twenty-five will come out together on a Saturday afternoon, sending no word ahead, but bringing great hampers of provisions with them. They eat and drink; then take up the rugs in the great hall and dance till the small hours. Beds enough have been improvised for what is left of the night, and another day brings pleasure no less real, though quiet.

It was a vision of sweet, sunlit, radiant youth, steeped in the tenth century atmosphere of romance.

I asked the little chatelaine if she could believe in the reality of all around her, and not always

feel that she was living in a fairy tale. To this she replied that to a certain degree that sensation was inevitable, but that beneath it was a sober stratum of reality. This is the life that they two have deliberately chosen, and entered upon with full purpose of heart. They adopt, in the common round, a modification of the Catalan costume, and in every way seek to identify themselves with the village folk, sharing their burdens, helping, teaching and sympathizing. In short, these young and gifted creatures have inaugurated at Castell'-nou an idealized, Americanized feudalism, which, as we recalled the content and kindliness of the people we had seen at the foot of the castle, appears to be workable and benign.

We reluctantly came away from a scene of utter and unique charm. Descending in the Opel to the first turn, we looked back and upward. There again, on the ivied battlement, as when we approached, we saw the two youthful figures: he in his khaki blouse, she in her gown of rose-coloured muslin; white hands and handkerchiefs waving. Another curve rounded, and we lost them; but once more, as we came out on the great hill's shoulder, our eyes captured their figures, though faint and small now as wild flowers in a niche of some crannied wall. We caught a motion of hand and handkerchief, faint as the tremor

of a columbine blossom. Another turn; we lost them. We shall see them now no more.

. . . . . .

Another day we started out after luncheon in the Opel with Don Carlos, bound, we did not know where; trusting that at least his well trained Aragonese chauffeur did; which, however, he did not. First was to dash down past Corneilla, and the old fort and the newer Vauban fortress of Villefranche, catching glimpses through defiles leading straight to Spain; then, the floor of the valley reached, down stream past Ria and other villages to Prades.

At Prades the Canigou suddenly stepped forward, with a wave dismissed his retinue, disclosed his full sweep and height, and with his coronation robes of purple and ermine and diadem of snow, proclaimed himself in majesty king of the Eastern Pyrenees.

Prades is a smiling, busy little town, but we turned sharply to the left as soon as we entered and crossed the Cadi to the road on the other side of the valley. We ascended next, until we saw rising cliffs, stone walls, towers and also tree-tops waving on a level with our road, which plunged at this point steeply to the bottom of a narrow gorge. An *établissement* declared itself and we were in Molitg. We went through the

MONT CANIGOU.

baths, wondered at the coffin-shaped tubs, the curious gloom, the invincible dreariness of the genuine old-fashioned French *Bain*. How different from the shine and sheen, the exquisite freshness of Vernet-les-Bains!

We wandered a little by the river and came back to take counsel with the chauffeur of another car as to the possibility of reaching the Col de Jau, a pass of five thousand feet altitude. Don Carlos was assured that it was impossible. This was decisive and off we went. It needed but *this* and the knowledge that we were short of petrol! We sped on through a verdant valley, the Canigou peering through the opening at the south, as if to see what we were doing, — such fantastic, noisy raiders upon the solemnity of these mountain silences and retreats. No one now knew the road except as Don Carlos held the map open on his knee. But on we went.

At Mosette, a mountain village with a fine old church, we all descended. In the loggia of the church squatted a hunchback with a flaming brazier and an enormous bellows worked by his foot. Around him lay great numbers of water pots and pans which he was coating with fresh metal, so that they shone delusively as with silver. He was dark of eye, sallow of cheek, imperturb-

able, wholly unimpressed by the Opel which had drawn, when we came out of the church, the whole population beside, around it. This much was learned: no one in Mosette ever sold petrol; no one knew of a motor car climbing to the crest of, far less crossing, the Col de Jau. Again, enough. There was now really some spice in the situation, for Don Carlos. So on we went, at a mad pace, sure now of meeting no autos, as we whizzed around the sharp curves of the rough mountain road.

A complete change soon fell upon the aspect of things. A new world seemed all at once created. A huge silvery cloud, which darkened as we dashed toward it, and frowned coldly upon us, rested upon vast, treeless summits; on the other side of the road woods of oak and chestnut persisted a little further. The road had become extremely bad; there was a curious sense of desolation everywhere. We saw no man or beast save a shepherd with his flock standing in a field below the road. The dog objected violently to our passing; the shepherd regarded us discontentedly; there seemed nowhere a welcome. We were on a strange planet, as it were. We passed gloomy ruins; of what? They reminded me of that "squat tower without a counterpart," of Childe Roland.

As we advanced, the ground became crimson

SHEEP ON THE COL DE JAU.

with Alpine roses; there were frequent clumps of tall, magnificent blue columbine, of yellow mountain anemones, and patches of the Pyrenean violet with its long white throat. These bespoke the great altitude attained, as they do not bloom on low lands.

Suddenly a house was before us, of dark stone, bleak, forbidding; a small, massive structure like a jail. On its walls we read on the usual blue field in white letters the distance we had come from Prades, the distance we should go if we persisted in pushing on to Ax, the station on the far side of the Pass. We pushed on for a mile, while the world grew more chill and stern. The cloud hung low upon us and a wind blew coldly from that unknown path ahead. A group of shaggy ponies, disturbed by our intrusion, flung up their heads and dashed off in wild freedom, scampering across to the opposite slope, where a troop of rugged bulls lifted heavy heads, stared coldly at us and held their ground.

We had stopped because the road had stopped. It lost itself now on the close-cropped, unbroken mountain summit. Don Carlos wished to go on, sure that the road would pick itself out of the mountain wild on the farther slope. Also Ax was nearer then Prades for petrol. Yes, but who knows when or how we should find Ax? Did we

care to face that cordon of bulls which still confronted us, hostile, considering? My heart beat hard for fear of our host's decision. I asked with feigned nonchalance, —

"Will there be enought petrol to take us back to Prades?"

Don Carlos shrugged his most expressive shoulders. He seldom speaks, then few words, but his smile gives sudden illumination to the sardonic, languid countenance.

"If the petrol gives out, could oxen, such as we have seen below, be made to drag the Opel down to Ax?"

"Hardly. It would not be *pratique*."

"What would be *pratique?*"

Another shrug, a low laugh, a friendly twinkle.

"We would have to wait while petrol was brought. This would be the only way."

The prospect did not allure. It had gone six long ago and no sun seemed anywhere. I, being the only woman, forebore to intermeddle with the doings of my betters. The chauffeur brought me a double handful of the rich blue columbine. As I received it a motion of Don Carlos' hand caused him to take his place and his wheel. I watched in suspense. The car was turned. It headed now towards Prades. Thank heaven! We leaped into our seats and leaned back luxuri-

ously in the cushions. The day was won. At least we were not flying through a trackless waste to evils that we knew not of, and past that challenge of the Pyrenean bulls!

Bad and lonely roads, wild dashes around precipice edges, with a sudden halt likely to be called at any moment, while some one is despatched a little matter of fifteen miles for petrol, seemed nothing. Instantly everything changed as we descended. The cloud was behind us and the wind with it. The air was all at once caressingly warm and laden with wild sweetness of wood and moss, fern and flower. A sense of cheer and comfort was diffused as we looked down into the green valley and caught far glimpses of stern old Canigou, still watching.

"Yes, we are alive and coming back!" I felt like shouting to him.

We met the shepherd, on the road now, driving his flock homeward. The sheep, the dog at their heels, huddled cannily at one side to let us pass. The dog was too busy now to object to us. We reached Mosette again, but dashed through it at a pace which permitted no greetings of the friends who watched our passing in wonder. The tree-tops of the Gorge of Molitg waved us adieu as we rushed past them. Prades and petrol began to seem possible.

"Shall we make it?" M'sieur asked Don Carlos.

"I do not know," he said, and smiled brilliantly.

CORNEILLA, ON THE ROAD TO LE VERNET.

CHAPTER XIV

GREAT SHADES OF CARCASSONNE

IT was seven of the early July morning when we stopped our horses at Corneilla for a last look back toward Vernet under the Canigou's mighty shadow. Never have we left a place of transient abode so unwillingly; nevertheless the magic of the word *Carcassonne*, the belief that we were at last, this very day, to see its walls, was a gleam worth following.

Arrived at Villefranche-Conflent, we found the station, despite the early hour, alive with travellers, all boarding electric cars headed up the narrow defile towards Mont Louis at the head of the Cerdagne Pass, the highest fortified village in France, a mile above sea level. Two months previous, in May, this line from Villefranche to Mont Louis was declared open in the presence of the Inspector-General of Railways of France, and was handed over to the Company of the Midi. Its construction had cost thirty-two million francs.

To-day with animated ceremonies the succeeding section of road, from Mont Louis to Bourg-Madame, was to be opened. This last named village, on French soil, looks across a narrow stream at the Spanish Puycedra; but both are Catalan.

What, precisely, where, precisely, is Catalonia? In despair we often asked ourselves this question, since the name appears nowhere in guide book or atlas, and yet everywhere in literature and in life. As we leave it let us mark it with a few words of definition.

Catalonia was an old principality of Aragon, conquered and reconquered by Saracens, by Charlemagne, by Counts of Barcelona and Counts of Roussillon. After long and wasteful wars the territories once grouped under this title have been divided between France and Spain, but a Catalan is a Catalan still and on whichever side of the Pyrenees he dwells he retains the Spanish type. The geographical terms Catalonia and Roussillon have disappeared from the modern atlas, but they remain regnant and the two are invisibly united. The Roussillon had, as ancient capital, the Roman town of Illiberis, now known as Elne. Here Hannibal halted after his march across the Pyrenees, in the year 215 B. C., and here Constantine founded a bishopric which en-

dured for thirteen hundred years. To-day Elne is a forgotten ruin, with a most lovely cloister; and Perpignan has become the capital of what is known no longer as the Roussillon or as Catalonia, but as the *Department of the Pyrénées Orientales*. But for all the modern re-naming and re-bounding of provinces, " where the mountain chain dips towards the Mediterranean, French territory includes a piece of Moorish Spain."

And just here we hailed again the beloved poet of Provence, Frédéric Mistral. For, in the year 1859 it was his to seal alliance between all brethren of the *Langue d'Oc*, whether Provençal or Catalan, in his famous " Song of the Cup," beginning,

> " Men of Provence, this Cup has come to us,
> Pledge of our Catalonian brothers' troth."

At each annual banquet of the Félibrige this song of the " Grail of Poetic Mysteries " is sung. The Spanish poet, Verdaguer, with his famous epic " Le Canigò," written in the Catalan dialect, has become to this part of the Midi what Mistral is to Provence.

A recent writer says: " Catalonia foots the bills for Spain but is not asked into the drawing-room, nor given a seat at table. As a natural result, ' Catalonia for Catalans! ' is a popular

cry; and, if, at any time, a Spanish revolution should dismember distracted Spain, the Catalans of France (the Roussillonais) will do more than sympathize with their brothers across the border."

Our whole day's travel was dominated by Mont Canigou which at Perpignan seems to bound half the horizon with the great sweep of its lower slopes, while its head towers just above the town itself. Perpignan we found pronouncedly Spanish and distinctly interesting. We wished for two days to spend in it instead of the two hours which would not permit the excursion, so desired, to Elne. But two hours permitted sauntering through a fascinating market where all the women wore Catalan caps and spoke Catalan dialect; a visit to the Cathedral of St. Jean over which presides Monseigneur de Carsalade, our Lord of the Abbey of St. Martin-du-Canigou; and an extremely good luncheon at the Lion d'Or, a quaint hostelry in the narrowest street ever known.

In the cathedral, which was the first we had seen of these southern churches without aisles and almost without transepts, we were much struck by the profuse richness of carving, gilding, banners; brilliant colour and ornament are everywhere. It must have been one of the days sacred to John Baptist, for a large bearded head of yellow wax lay on what I should fancy might have been

PROMENADE DES PLATANES, PERPIGNAN.

a charger, on an altar at the choir rail between vases of flowers! Many kisses of ardent devotion we saw bestowed upon it by the women worshippers. We found the scene a trifle Salomaic for our taste.

M'sieur and I had long since decided not to travel to Carcassonne as other folks do, *via* Narbonne, — a dull and featureless journey, — but by Quillan, a route leading through the valley of the river Aude. This meant dividing our journey into several stages, but we rather like that method. Our next stage, begun at two o'clock, was Perpignan to Quillan. Next, three and a half hours' wait; then rail for two hours more to Carcassonne. And when we reached Carcassonne, how well we knew what we meant to do! No Hotel Bernard in the Ville Basse for us, as once projected for our " tryst " in our uninitiated days! A friend in Vernet had yesterday sent on to M. Jordy, manager of a newly opened hotel in the citadel itself, a note commending us to mercy. Thus we knew ourselves expected, and prepared for within the very walls of the Citè.

As we journeyed on due west, leaving behind us the borders of old Catalonia for unknown Languedoc, I pointed out to M'sieur, in a book brought with me, this good bit of description by Vanoc: —

"Of all places I have ever seen on this globe there is an area of about five hundred square miles in Southern France in which I would gladly, in my next incarnation, be born a peasant. In this happy tract of the Roussillon nature has been more than kind, she has been effusive. To begin with, there is an elusive fragrance in the air, which is attributable partly to the presence of a perfumed herb with the scent of thyme, but more delicate; and partly to the pervading aroma from the woods. Next to Egypt, the aroma of which fascinates me, I love the southeast corner of France. The honey of Narbonne carries the aroma of the thyme, and the bees of Roussillon are better bees than the bees of Hybla. This is the land where the gentlemen of France have fought and loved and drained the cup of life through centuries of Romance."

All the early part of the journey up towards Quillan the great snow streaked head of the Canigou followed us. When we lost it, the noble Carlitte group loomed up to take its place. At first these mountains were desolate and sterile and the valley stern, but as we went deeper all changed, and the scenery became more and more beautiful. The mountains were richly wooded and rose peak on peak, varied by deep ravines and running water, the lower peaks

crowned by ruined castles. Between La Pradelle and Quillan, and especially around Axat, gorges and cañons became thrilling and the green rushing river Aude a perfect joy. After Quillan the country quieted down, so to speak, became sunny, broad-meadowed, vineyard-covered. But I am most desirous of returning to Quillan to take the drive through the Gorge de Pierre-Lys.

As we moved through the pleasant, smiling country, the Cevennes bounding the horizon on one side, the Pyrenees on the other, we suddenly saw, looming up on our right, the towers and ramparts of Carcassonne the *Incroyable*. We lost sight of it when we left the train but an obliging coachman from the Hotel de la Cité waited to meet and greet us, and soon we were rolling over the pavements of dignified, handsome streets and squares of the Ville Basse to the Aude. Here, as we crossed the bridge the strange vision of the ancient stronghold of kings and counts came again before us. Carcassonne, La Cité, as thus viewed, is grey in colour, vast in proportion, and as perfect in detail as if carved out of stone a few years ago, and placed as a world-wonder, fresh created, for all eyes to see. The enormous stretch, the magnificent, massive grace, the variety of tower and turret, bastion and barbican, complete an effect indescribably imposing.

We were driven up a steep slope, then crossed the bed of the moat by an ancient drawbridge and entered, under its great towers, the Porte Narbonaise. The narrow, cobble paved street with real, every-day houses and little antiquity shops on each side, turned corner after corner until we reached the entrance of the beautiful Cathedral of St. Nazaire. Here the carriage stopped before an arch between laurel bushes, over which was inscribed *Hotel de la Cité.* Inside was grass under a wide, pleasant grove of platanes; a terrace set with small tables, and, just beyond them, the ramparts of Carcassonne. A kindly young man, M. Jordy, came out to greet us. The letter of our friend had been received and prepared a warm welcome for our coming.

We were taken into the hotel, formerly the Bishop's Palace, and up to a great red-tiled chamber, where all the appointments were on a double and enormous scale, fit for children of Anak. Tired and heated, the lucidity and coolness of the place were most welcome; welcome also the afternoon tea speedily brought up to us.

We rested until dinner time, and were then ushered through the lower rooms out upon the terrace, where, to our surprise, sat our good London friend, Mr. Rojair, before a small table, magazine in hand, as we were wont to see him at

meal time. He had left our group at the Hotel Mercader in Vernet, only the day before, preceding us by only twenty-four hours in Carcassonne. He gave us kindly greeting, and as we went on to our table we felt quite in our element, despite the novelty of our surroundings. Here we sat, just within those ramparts built by St. Louis on the Roman and Visigoth foundation, the stern Tower of the Inquisition and the Tower of the Bishop, flanking the terrace right and left. Down below us lay a glorious stretch of country with the Cevennes and the Pyrenees on the horizon line, the Ville Basse with the spires of St. Michel and St. Vincent all dyed golden by the long rays of the setting sun.

I was almost too excited by the scene around me to eat my dinner, but such a dinner! Soup, fish, *petits pois*, *pâté de foies gras*, roast pigeon, salad, — all of rare delicacy and perfection of cooking; then peaches and strawberries, *nougat exquis*, and, a specialty of Mme. Jordy, a confiture of oranges cut in quarters and steeped in a lucent, amber syrup to which Keats alone could do justice.

Dinner over, we went for a stroll around the *enceinte* with Mr. Rojair. The sun had set, the day was deeply red in the west and above, where it shaded first white, then blue, hung the evening

star and the young moon. In the twilight the scene around us and the world beneath acquired an unearthly grandeur and beauty and we could not see why we should ever go anywhere else.

We told Mr. Rojair the story of our proposed tryst at Hotel Bernard in Carcassonne, and how, after certain difficulties, we had met instead at Avignon, how Alps and rivers, seas and plains lay between the tryst and Carcassonne, which we decided now to call our anti-tryst. "But to think," I always concluded all such speeches, "if we had not first gone to Vernet we should never have known the glorious possibility of being lodged within the precincts of the *Cité Incroyable!*'

Next morning at nine we started to make the complete round between the two lines of fortifications, accompanied by M. Jordy, who, I really believe, knows the history of every stone. Most extraordinary we found the work of subfoundation by Philippe le Hardi which put a mediaeval stratum *beneath* the Roman, — made necessary by the cutting down of the hill below. We could see the big-blocked Roman work, the brick alternations of Visigoth, then the *embossage* of the feudal Philip and the smooth squared, exact faces of the masonry of St. Louis. The two gates, the fifty towers, were all passed in

CARCASSONNE, LA CITÉ FROM THE NORTHEAST.

review. M. Jordy explained the drawbridge, portcullis, the barbicans, the subterranean passage to the moat, the ruined or "sprung tower," the *meurtrières*, the chateau or citadel. Many are the devices of openings through the masonry for catapults to stone, or for men at arms to pour down boiling oil and water; for archers to aim. And every detail exists to-day in its original shape, owing to the marvellous recreative power of M. Viollet-le-Duc. The colline on which Carcassonne stands was a strategic point in this part of France through all the ages. The Romans occupied it more than a hundred years before the Christian era; from 440 A. D. to 701 it was in the hands of the Visigoths; then, for fifty years it was held by the Saracens. From 759 to 1209 counts and viscounts ruled, until Simon de Montfort made himself master after a memorable siege. In 1247, after Earl Simon had passed off the scene of action, Carcassonne was permanently united to the Crown of France. To-day it has become a national monument, and the most remarkable mediaeval military construction in Europe, beyond a doubt.

And within all this complexity of defence, to-day, little soft-voiced children play together with their gentle "*s'il vous plait, Maries*," to each other; old dames in white caps sit in the shade in

the afternoons before dark doorways with their sewing and gossip cheerfully across the narrow street. These streets wind at angles most remarkable, but have picturesque bits, and are not unclean compared with the average French town. Pink geraniums, picture postcards and faded eighteenth century prints, rusty tankards and breadths of old tapestry fill the small shop casements. The inhabitants are eight hundred in number; they seem content and at peace. Thank God that the horrors of war are no more! In the *Lices* (the Lists), between the outer and inner fortifications, great tournaments were held of old. On their short grass I saw a woman raking a scanty crop of hay, while a small, mouse-coloured donkey waited, dozing on the ground, to carry it off; and all about us the air was sweet with aroma of the cut mint and thyme. At every opening in the walls appeared glimpses of the Pyrenees, or of the Cevennes; and in the Ville Basse I always looked for the fine, rugged tower of St. Michel, standing like a shepherd with his flock.

But the most beautiful thing in the Cité is the ex-Cathedral of St. Nazaire. There is no Gothic church to surpass it in Southern France, albeit it is only Gothic in part. The west wall is fifth century; the magnificent aisled nave is Roman, with massive pillars of great size and splendidly

diverse capitals. At the transept another architecture succeeds, *i. e.*, purest French Gothic, — slender, graceful, delicately lovely in every line and curve of groining and flower-topped pillars, the height of the capitals broken by statues of canopied saints. There is a remarkable double colonnade across both transepts and apse, the latter being very shallow. The fourteenth century stained glass is lovely beyond words; two great rose windows of marvellous richness and purity of tone at north and south, while the choir glass is simply glorious.

As you enter and look down the left aisle with its stern and heavy Roman vaulting and tremendous pillars, the eastern light streams through the violet, crimson and ultramarine of the distant apse window and stains the soaring lines of the Gothic transept with a beauty which makes you breathless. I found highest interest in the splendidly preserved tombs of old bishops and archbishops and in the marvellous grotesques; while an entire volume might be written on the sculptured saints of the choir. Outside there are graceful buttresses and gargoyles, in pleasing variety. The whole church is a marvel of skilful and inspired restoration. In the main the building dates from the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Our second morning in Carcassonne we devoted

to visiting the interior of towers and passages, making the tour this time under the wing of the official guide for la Cité. We missed the gentlemanly, scholarly explanations of M. Jordy, who has achieved a perfect command of the history and archaeology of the place, qualifying him to be an expert lecturer. This second tour was fatiguing; the heat was great, and it was with relief that we found ourselves at the close of the prescribed round, overlooking an open amphitheatre furnished with a stage and wooden benches. Here, our cicerone informed us, members of the *Comédie Française* from time to time give dramatic representations. He added with fervent emphasis,

" Oh, but you should have been here in May and seen them render ' Omlay! ' "

The man was so impressive and so fixed us with his glittering eye, that, although we had no remote notion what *Omlay* might be, we strove to look appreciative.

He repeated his remark with added enthusiasm, stating that when the *Esprit du Roi* appeared on these very ramparts where we now stood, the effect was thrilling beyond words. Then we understood and wished it had been ours to see a French version of Hamlet, even if it demanded such murder of the name of Denmark's prince.

M. Jordy informed us that in February, 1912, the owners of the Hotel de la Cité will begin the work of demolition of the present house, which has but eight bedrooms, and of re-building on the foundation of the Bishop's palace a house of several times the present capacity. As far as comforts and conveniences go the new hotel will be wholly twentieth century, but architecturally and artistically it is to be modelled after a thirteenth century palace, and this character is to be carried out in the most detailed and effective manner possible. This seems a very happy purpose, since a modern hotel would be an annoying anachronism in Carcassonne itself, and yet the present antiquated building leaves something to be desired. The great terrace on the ramparts in which we took such delight will be retained and rendered more attractive by wise garden architects.

It was our last evening in Carcassonne. The glorious landscape below the Cité was lying in the glamour of the young summer moon. I left the gentlemen to their cigars and their conversation on the terrace of the Bishop's garden. There they sat in peaceful indifference to the cruel Towers of the Inquisition and of the Visigoth, between which their modern easy chairs were drawn. How one learns in Carcassonne to reel off the

centuries between Theodoric, the Visigoth and Dominic, the Monk, as if they were hours on a time table! Alone, because I wished to be alone for a little, I strayed down by the Porte d'Aude and watched the moonlight playing over the tremendous conical-capped towers of the citadel the deep embrasures of the crenelated defences beyond the Gate, and the long reach of the great Barbican. The whole scene was of an impressiveness not devoid of awe, overflowing also with suggestions of the mighty drama in which human beings have had stern parts to play. Great spirits, greater far than that of the Royal Dane, seemed to move along the ramparts above my head, and to enter the High Lists along whose peaceful grassy slopes my eyes wandered. I sat down upon a coping of rough granite and before the eye of my mind passed certain of those spirits of Carcassonne's great past.

Out from the deep gloom of the *Avant-porte* a blithe figure and debonair seemed first to glide, wearing a cap with a peacock plume, singing as he came, to his lute:

> *"Harde is his heart that loveth naught*
> *In spring when all this mirth is wrought,*
> *When he may on these braunches here*
> *The smalle birdes singen clere*
> *Her blissful sweete song piteous,*
> *Here in this season delitious."*

A marvellous gaiety seemed diffused by the song of the Troubadour, who was followed by a throng of beautiful women and splendid knights, all in the lustre of youth, all sumptuous with jewels, with velvet, satin and ermine. And while the Troubadour sang on, heralds and servants ran to and fro, spreading rich carpets and canopies, and in a nonce the Lists were transformed into a brilliant Court of Love, such as the twelfth century delighted in. The fairest of the women was enthroned, amid pursuivants at arms and graceful pages; and before her other minstrels appeared, to vie with the Troubadour for her favour. Roses were thrown in showers by white hands and the air seemed to ring with praises of human love. And all songs were sung in the language of old Aquitania, the *Langue d'Oc.*

But the scene changed. Only the moonlight flickered over the grass of the Lists, and yet I saw that the place was not deserted. Slowly there came forward a venerable man in coarse garments of gray cloth, an open book in his hands, from which, as he walked, he read. Immediately, springing from all sides, there thronged around this man a multitude of poor folk, wan-cheeked women, toilworn men, and between them ran many little children with pinched faces. All these flocked about the Teacher, and as they listened

their faces grew gentler and smiles came to the lips of the children. And all that he read was in the speech of the common people, the *Langue d'Oc*, and the words were words of love divine.

Then to my great wonder there came a burst of minstrels' song and with it back into the arena came the Troubadour, leading with him the brilliant company of knights and ladies, and, strange to see, the rich and the poor mingled and all spoke one language, that of love human and love divine. And many prayed, and as they prayed, said: "O Christ, Thou art the hope of them that look to Thee for the forgiveness of sins."

But when these words were spoken I perceived a shape, dim but colossal, moving slowly from the shadow of the cathedral and standing aloof, threatening, august. And this figure was clothed in rich robes and upon the head rested the triple crown. I perceived that this was the great Innocent III of deathless memory; and in his hands were the keys of heaven and hell. Then all the strangely mingled company of those who sang and those who read and those who prayed, turning and perceiving the mighty shade, lifted hands of horror and the cry went up alike from gentle and simple:

"*God confound thee, Rome! Thou draggest all who trust in thee into the bottomless pit. Thy balance*

is gold, and thy pardons must be bought for silver."

With the words the whole multitude vanished, and the dim, far figure of Innocent stood alone. A voice stern and thrilling as with the stroke of steel on flint was heard, and the words were spoken in Latin, and they were:

" Curse me these people, saith my God, who defy the power of the keys. Who will go for us to curse? and whom shall we send? "

Then proceeded slowly from the dimness beyond, where the form of Innocent faded from my sight, a splendid cavalcade of caparisoned horses, men at arms, and richly laden sumpter mules. At its head, in royal pomp, rode one in priest's garments and to him was delegated the power to bind and to scourge and to destroy. But as the Legate rode down between the outer and the inner walls he was met by a bare-footed Monk of dark visage, who challenged him sternly, crying:

" Never can you combat this heresy on this wise. Know you not that it has in its power the whole Albigeois, Carcassonne, and Lauragais from Beziers to Bordeaux? All this pomp will but make it stronger. Sow the good seed as the heretics sow the bad. Cast off those sumptuous robes; renounce those richly caparisoned palfreys; go barefoot, without purse and scrip, like the Apostles.

Out-labour, out-fast, out-discipline these false teachers."

The Monk thus speaking I knew to be the Spanish Dominic, the great Inquisitor, and a pang of pity ran through me for the people. They had swarmed again into the Lists, fear and dread in their faces. At their head was a high and puissant Prince, Raymond of Toulouse; and I thought him valiant in courage and of a heart full of tenderness for the great realm of which he was lord. With him walked two youthful warriors: his son, Raymond; his nephew, Viscount Roger of Beziers and Carcassonne. To them the Legate and Dominic, with their followers, advanced; and with fierce threats they bade Raymond chastise his subjects for their heresy. But he turned away and stretched arms of protection over his "good people" instead, and I saw them grow glad and they seemed no longer to fear. Then there rang, from the lips of the Legate, the awful dictum of *anathema* upon Count Raymond, and all became confusion.

Next I was suddenly aware that there seemed to rise, far down the long Lists, the sculptured front of the Church of St. Gilles; the moon became clouded, but I dimly saw the form of the Legate lying dead on the ground. Men with faces full of wrath and horror came and bore away the body,

and there was darkness. But presently, the cloud passing, I looked and still before me was the triple portal of St. Gilles, and through the central arch I saw far down the nave an altar. Before the altar, in the dim light of torches, with half naked body, knelt the noble lord, Raymond, and about him stood priests who scourged him for suspected violence to the Roman Legate, while his blood ran down upon his garment of sackcloth. Then the outlines of St. Gilles faded before my eyes, and again, in the place where I had seen it before, rose that mighty, threatening shape of Innocent, and cried:

"*Cursed is Raymond, impious, cruel and direful tyrant, and all his lands are taken from him and given to the faithful. Amen! Who will go to fight for us against this carrion bird of evil? and whom shall we send?*"

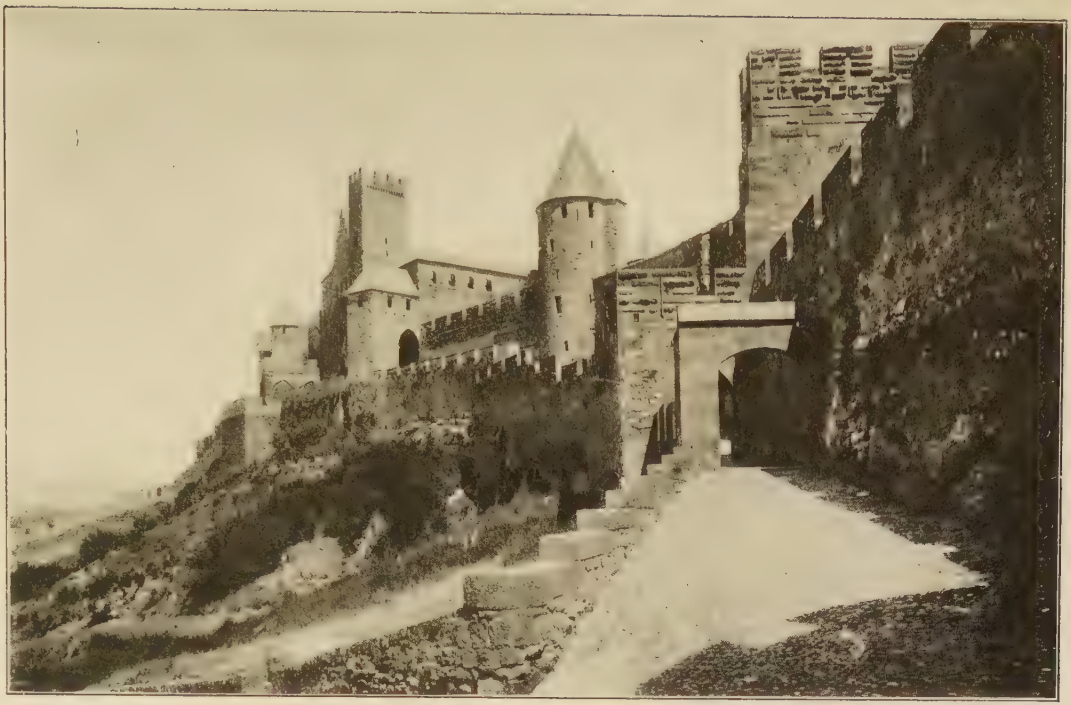
I thought the ground beneath my feet trembled, when there strode now into the midst and bent before the majesty of Rome, a knight-crusader, cross on his breastplate, sword in mailed hand, a mighty man of valour. His visor was opened; I saw a handsome but a sinister and cruel face and knew that this was that Simon de Montfort, who should work awful woe for Carcassonne. There followed the heavy tread of mailed and armed men, a mighty host who followed the great Earl.

These all bore drawn swords and burning torches and their helmets were closed. But upon the breast of each man was the Cross, and as they marched they shouted:

"Up, soldiers of Christ! Crush the heretic and win your soul's salvation. Up, for the new crusade! Slay and spare not! Slay all. God will know His own!"

Then I lifted my eyes and looked beyond the ramparts and beyond the river and out into the fair land rich in vineyards and orchards, in smiling villages and goodly castles, and the army covered it with swift onrush, burning and pillaging and destroying until not a living thing survived. And always at the army's head was the merciless Earl Simon. Far to the east on the horizon, where lay a strong city, I saw flames, which grew and spread to a mighty conflagration and I knew that I had seen the burning of Beziers by the army. Suddenly I heard a gate swing on its hinges, and the rattle of a drawbridge behind me, as it fell. I turned to look, and into the shelter of Carcassonne's mighty defences there ran a little company of haggard refugees, and at their head the young and noble Count Roger of Beziers.

In silence I sat alone and called to remembrance the siege which followed; the chivalry and faith of the young lord to his people; Carcassonne compassed with the army of Simon de Montfort;



PORTE D'AUDE, CARCASSONNE.

days filled with ceaseless slaughter and nights with heroic, hopeless sallies.

But then again there came into my sight the mighty figures of those who had part in that struggle; and they filled the Lists where still the moonlight had power to work its spell. It was the Day of Doom for Carcassonne. Its young Count stood alone, it seemed, and watched the masses of the people as they obeyed his command and fled from the Cité by a subterranean passage leading beneath the walls to the open country. Weeping and wringing their hands, they departed. But even so there came and stood around the conquered man a company of near five hundred, his faithful lieges, who chose to abide with him.

I heard the thunder of many hoofs on the bridge below the hill and the clang of sword and shield. Once more the sinister, invincible shade of Simon de Montfort advanced down the Lists, and before him on their knees sank the company of the conquered. I saw the Conqueror send away all the band of the faithful to instant and cruel massacre. Then, with a stern motion of his hand, he delivered Count Roger, in his youth and noble beauty, to the foul dungeon where he soon must die.

There was stillness; the shouting had ceased, and with it the cries of the victims in the Cité

behind me. Erect, proud, victorious, alone, stood Earl Simon, and laid aside his helmet, and sheathed his sword. He crossed to the ramparts and surveyed the lands far and wide from Beziers to Toulouse. All Languedoc was now his, pledged by Innocent to him who should despoil the great Raymond of Toulouse of his ancestral realm. I seemed then to hear the memorable words given by the Spoiler in his charter:

"*I, Simon, Lord of Montfort, Earl of Leicester* (Count of Toulouse), *Viscount of Beziers and Carcassonne; the Lord having delivered into my hands the lands of the heretics, an unbelieving people; that is to say, whatsoever He hath thought fit to take from them by the hand of the crusaders, His servants, I accept humbly and devoutly this charge and administration.*"

The great war lord vanished, and the Lists were empty.

Was the last word said?

Even with my thought there advanced slowly to the spot where Earl Simon had just now stood, the figure of Count Raymond of Toulouse, a broken-hearted, broken-spirited man. He, too, gazed afar, and his eyes, in which the fire had been extinguished, embraced all Languedoc, his ancestral realm. Far south in Italy he saw his awful foe, Innocent, dying in torments of remorse for the

deeds of blood which he had commended. Under the walls of his own Toulouse, that noble city whose very *bones had been broken* by Simon de Montfort, he saw the great Earl himself, stricken down to his death. In prophetic vision he beheld from these gates of Carcassonne the nobler son of de Montfort going out for ever, and giving up "*to our Lord Louis, the illustrious King of the French all the privileges and gifts that the Roman Church did grant unto our father Simon of pious memory, in respect to the countship of Toulouse and other districts in Albigeois.*"

Yes, the great Lord of Toulouse had won back to himself and to his son and to his son's sons, the once fair and pleasant heritage of his race; but the lands that stretched before him blackened, burned, drenched in blood, devastated by the armies of the crusaders, were no longer fair and pleasant; and of his "good people" the flower had perished. Troubadour and Teacher and those who had followed each, had ceased from the land, nevermore to return.

And Carcassonne, the mighty scene of mighty deeds, alone abides inviolate, I thought, as I rose to wander back to the terrace and the present. But as I went I seemed nevertheless to leave behind me in the moonlight those great Shades of Carcassonne.

CHAPTER XV

OLD SHRINES OF LANGUEDOC

IT seems to be the accepted part of the modern traveller in France to cry down the city of Toulouse.

For this reason we approached the ancient capital of Aquitania with small expectations and remained day after day because these expectations were so greatly exceeded by the reality. We distinctly liked Toulouse and enjoyed a city of the Midi which was neither dead nor moribund, but quick with eager, joyous life. It is noisy, bustling, enterprising, full of colour and action, and far more picturesque than Lyons or Marseilles.

Our hotel, the Europe (leaving out the adjectives of which there are the usual number) was noisy, bustling, full of colour and action also. Moreover it offered to a devoted clientèle the most opulent and varied table which we encountered in the Midi. Once accustomed to noise which never suffered pause, we liked the house extraor-

dinarily and were wont to congratulate ourselves that we had not sought the stately silence aloof of the better-known Tivolliers.

Toulouse has four claims, at least, to serious attention: its Musée; its remarkable old houses; its river Garonne; its churches of St. Etienne and St. Saturnin (Sernin in the common speech).

The Musée is of surpassing interest and most beautifully staged, in the fourteenth century Augustinian convent. Entering by the small cloister with its cool, plashing fountain, its old statues and reliefs, set off with rich greenery of vines, the first impression was of unlooked-for charm. We had wandered about the city enough before coming here to become accustomed to the prevailing Tolosan brick, and to realize that old brick is as beautiful as old stone. We had already named Toulouse the old-rose town; and here again, in the cloister walls, we welcomed the mellow russet tone. But the little cloister was forgotten quickly when we found ourselves in the greater, among magnificent remains of Graeco-Roman glory and tombs of Tolosan knights-crusaders and archbishops, set in the frame of successive trefoil arches of marvellous grace.

I was interested later to find this summing up by Taine who visited Toulouse after his journey in the Pyrenees: "That in Toulouse, which one

finds most striking on issuing from the mountains, is the Musée. One finds there thought, passion, genius, art, all the fairest flowers, in fine, of human civilization."

Old historic houses opulent in sculptured ornament, caryatides and coats of arms, built around stately courts, are seen frequently in certain quarters of the city. Everywhere are tokens of a sumptuous mediaeval life and of that heyday of Toulouse when its counts were lords also of Provence, of Narbonne and of St. Gilles, — the mightiest lords of all France.

The Garonne is a rushing, vital stream, more fascinating far than the Rhone. We delighted in its bridges and quays, especially at the hour of sunset. The spires and domes of the city etched against a red sky, all dominated by the tower of the Dalbade; the groups of people sitting around their house doors, resting and conversing cheerfully; the tumultuous flow of the river where all else was still, produced a memorable impression.

Of the two great churches, contrary to the rest of the world, we preferred the Cathedral of St. Etienne. Without, it is a most unpromising, shapeless structure; within, despite the startling irregularity in the construction on different axes of the nave and choir, the church produces a profound if indefinable sense of spiritual exal-

tation. The time to visit St. Etienne is late afternoon when the glorious windows are irradiated by the sinking sun. St. Sernin I declared on the spot tremendously imposing and awe-inspiring. Its tower is noble; its semicircle of apses built into the choir most extraordinary; it possesses the most perfect Romanesque interior I have seen with walls of fine brown stone; but the uncoloured windows and the heavy severity of its architecture rob it of the power to produce a devotional impression.

The Hotel de Ville fails to be keenly interesting, although I loved the Court of Henri IV and this, the first statue thus far encountered of the joyous Gascon. But more vividly interesting I found the Hall of the Illustrious with its mural paintings of the great Count Raymond, and the wildly excited apotheosis (on the ceiling) of the woman who killed Simon de Montfort, as he stood below the walls of Toulouse, by hurling a stone down upon his head. That is really the sort of militant woman one likes to see apotheosized.

From Toulouse we made an excursion through the valleys of the Aveyron, the Dordogne, the Lot and the Tarn; an excursion which comprehends some of the loveliest and most famous river scenery of France. Our first objective point was the famous old pilgrimage place on the bor-

ders of Perigord, Roc-Amadour (written frequently *sans* hyphen); our second, Albi. Had time and strength permitted, we should have included the Gorges of the Tarn and the Gouffre de Padeirac. We leave those for that consummation of travel most ardently to be desired: an automobile tour of Southern France, with time for — *everything!* Time, for instance, to stop at Najac whose castle, incomparably bold and picturesque, overlooks the soft, enchanting valley of the Lot. The perfect roads found throughout the Midi, set off against the very imperfect railroad system when one leaves the main trunk lines, give every advantage to those who can travel *en auto*.

At the station of Roc-Amadour we found a species of primitive stage waiting to convey us across country three miles to *la Vallée Ténébreuse* and the famous shrine itself. At the little station of Hospitalet, a resting place for pilgrims in the olden time, we saw, of a sudden, a gash in the wide stretch of open country. Grey, ribbed cliffs framed in a narrow gulf of green along whose western rim wound our Pilgrim's Way. Far ahead there sprang from the depths of this gulf a mighty crag, crowned by a *chateau-fort* and holding on successive levels the churches and houses of Roc-Amadour, clinging, apparently, to the perpendicular face of the cliff. The roofs

were the quaintest in shape and richest in colour which I can remember ever having seen; of a rich burnt umber, and furnished with odd little towers and unexpected gables. Flowers were blossoming in every possible nook and cranny; crows sailed slowly around the summit of the rock. The whole scene was a very climax of the picturesque.

Our approach to Roc-Amadour was from above. Leaving our conveyance, we plunged down the steep lanes and stairs to the point, midway to the bottom, where the rock juts forward sufficiently to give place to the church and chapels of St. Sauveur and St. Amadour. As we looked into the ancient Gothic façades alternating with the faces of beetling, primitive rock, shutting us in on every side, we felt that we had descended into another world. But when we entered the Hotel de Sainte Marie we felt ourselves again in old, very old, France, although the little inn is newly made over, and quite fresh and shining.

Nevertheless it was Midi of the Midi, as we perceived anew the next morning, when our coffee was brought us in huge bowls with table spoons. But the brass tray and white napkins were shining and spotless; and even in this utter old-worldness all the linen in the house was beautifully embroidered. And it was a head centre of truffles and *patés de foies gras!*

Roc-Amadour had among its few hundred inhabitants one who could speak English, and speak it without accent. This was our landlady's pretty eighteen-year-old daughter, Madeleine. With her amazing command of English, her social charm and self possession, she seemed to us, as a product of that stern, isolated rock, truly a miraculous maiden. But Roc-Amadour's veritable *Vierge Miraculeuse* is a small black image, kept in the *Chapelle Miraculeuse,* said to have been carved by Zaccheus, the publican, who made this rock his hermitage, and who is puzzlingly identified with Amadour. As far as appears Zaccheus became known as Saint Amadour on establishing this retreat. In it he died, and here his indestructible body is buried. This on high ecclesiastical authority!

Time fails to rehearse the miracles and legends which haunt this ancient rock. We were in a realm of myth and fable, all of which, however, take on a certain verisimilitude by reason of the faith reposed in them through the long ages. The church is lined with figures of the great kings and potentates from St. Louis down, who have come here as humble pilgrims; and the Chapel walls are covered with *ex votos* of those to whom Our Lady of Roc-Amadour has shown herself compassionate. It is impossible to look about this inner

shrine and read the inscriptions of the tablets without a stir of emotion. "*À Marie, cause de notre joie, Juillet, 1868,*" is one, and type of many.

The most interesting votive offering was that of the parents of Fénelon, the great Bishop. In his infancy he was dangerously ill, and his life was given back, according to the belief of his parents, by the Virgin of Roc-Amadour. Their memorial of gratitude is to be seen in the gallery of the Chapel — a dim oil painting of their child at the crisis of his illness.

But I think the sight which impressed us most in this impressive place was the scene at high mass on Sunday morning in the great dusky church. Among the worshippers was a company of peasant pilgrims from we knew not where. All were men, many old men with white hair, bent shoulders, stiffened limbs, gnarled, knotted hands. All wore black blouses, and all entered into the service with absorbed devotion.

In the afternoon we spent hours in visiting the many chapels of Roc-Amadour and in hearing the many legends with which it overflows. But better than the chapels we liked the *Maison de Marie*, a retreat for weary souls, built into the very texture of the rock, and overlooking *la Vallée Ténébreuse*. On its wall we read the following:

"*La plaisir de mourir sans pein vaut bien la peine de vivre sans plaisir.*"

On our return journey to Toulouse we left the train at Tessonières; coming thence in twenty minutes through the Tarn Valley to Albi. The only thing one can think of in Albi is the story of the Albigenses, all traces of whom are obliterated; the only thing to see is the cathedral which stands hard, firm, undecaying in every line, seeming to defy the assaults of time in its massive military strength. At first approach it appeared wholly destitute of religious suggestion, a fortified church being a thing unfamiliar.

When we came to the south portal, however, the richness of sculpture relieved this impression. Once within the walls, the indescribable luxuriance of decoration, the sculptures of jubé and choir, the painted ceiling, and walls, struck a note of violent contrast to the sternly bare exterior. I think barbaric is the word one is forced to use in describing Albi Cathedral, and yet I hesitate to thus characterize it, since its magnificence is so ill conveyed by this adjective. It is destitute of spiritual suggestion, but it remains a wonder of the world in its incredible wealth of imagery.

CHAPTER XVI

IN THE HIGH PYRENEES

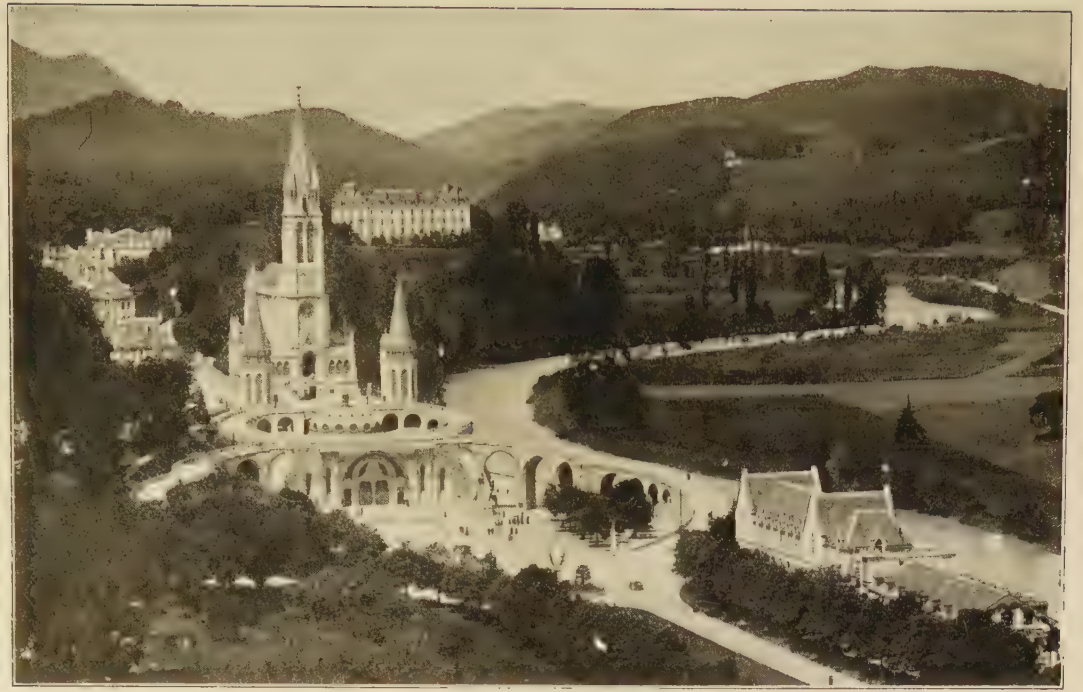
WE left Toulouse for the High Pyrenees early in July, planning to spend a week in Luchon and longer if we chose in Argelès, the limits of time requiring us to reach Pau in about three weeks. When we reached Montrejeau, after a charming ride through the valley of the Garonne, we yielded, as we were very sure we should, to the temptation to visit the solitary, historic cathedral of St. Bertrand-de-Comminges, of which our Avignon acquaintance, Clement V, was Bishop in the last decade of the thirteenth century. We accordingly drove from Montrejeau to Comminges and found an ancient and almost deserted village, surrounded by lovely mountains, the gabled presbytery and houses clustering around the heavily buttressed church on the crest of its colline.

There is a unique and subtle fascination about this spot which I think would draw me to it, if

possible, again and yet again. A powerful town in the Roman period, when its inhabitants were known as the Convenes, St. Bertrand was completely destroyed in the Gallo-Roman wars. In the year 1073 Bertrand came here as Bishop, a man who belongs to " that valiant line of bishops who have made France, as bees make their hive." Under him a new period of prosperity began and after his death his reputation for sanctity made of his cathedral a shrine.

About five hundred years of dominant and energetic life were granted to this bishopric, and throughout these centuries a wealth of artistic detail was lavished upon the interior of the cathedral and cloister. Since the Huguenot wars another period of decay has set in and in 1793 the bishopric was suppressed. The tides of war and of commerce, of religion and of social traffic, have alike swung wide from Comminges, but the valley and the mountains remain lovely and in the midst of them, like an eagle clinging to a rocky eyrie, stands the ex-cathedral, brooding above its decaying splendours and awaiting — is it death? Or is it fresh resurrection?

In two hours we were driven from St. Bertrand's to Lourdes-Barbazan, where we took the train down the valley to Luchon. Belloc, whose opinion I value highly, says one has to come to



LOURDES AND VALLEY OF ARCELÉS.

Luchon and it is much better than it might be. I am diffident about disputing the opinion of so experienced a Pyrenean traveller, but I can at least say that it is not nearly as good as it ought to be. The valley is beautiful and the mountains are imposing, but the village and the hotels are so placed as to miss all the finest points of view, and the Maladetta, the highest summit of the Pyrenees, which we had been assured was in full and glorious view from Luchon, was nowhere to be found. No one in the busy little watering place seemed to have the slightest interest or knowledge regarding this famous peak. By diligent inquiry we found that it could only be seen by a difficult and fatiguing expedition, quite beyond our limitations. The town has all the tiresome conventions of the typical fashionable resort.

Accordingly we found a week quite too long for Luchon, despite its noble surroundings. Our favourite drive was that to the Vallée du Lys, where we were delighted with our first *cirque*, that curious amphitheatrical conformation of the mountains so characteristic of the Pyrenees, which reaches a glorious climax at Gavarnie.

Coming back to Montrejeau, we pursued our way westward through delightful mountain scenery to Tarbes and Lourdes, where we entered the lovely

valley of Argelès, watered by the Gave du Pau. An hour in Argelès itself was sufficient to convince us that here all was congenial to us. It is a wholly different *entourage* from that of Luchon, and although the valley is wide and level and the mountains perhaps less striking than at Luchon, there is a sense of satisfaction and harmony in the atmosphere which no doubt belongs to Argelès as a dignified and charming old French country town, a place with a purpose and quality of its own, not a mere cluster of hotels and trinket shops.

We found the Hotel Angleterre homelike, excellently managed and highly favoured in its really splendid surrounding Park. Our rooms were spacious, airy and well appointed; the service was admirable, and we met charming people, French, Spanish and English. All things combined to make us happy in adding to Argelès the days taken from Luchon. Here we were in the heart of the *Pyrenées Hautes*, and here we found an unequalled centre for excursions. I think we remained throughout our wanderings loyal to Catalonia, — the *Pyrenées Orientales*, — but while the scenery immediately about Argelès is less striking than that around Vernet, the great variety and beauty of excursions to be made easily from the former are something of an advantage. But as Mr. Kip-

ling wrote back to Vernet, its hotels and its perfection of management spoil one for all that comes after in Pyrenean travel.

The hotels of Béarn (we now found ourselves in the central portion of the tripartite division of the Pyrenees) are distinctly different from those of Riviera resorts, but even more widely different from the genuine Provençal hostelries, or such as we found in Languedoc. The English frequent these mountain regions in sufficient numbers to impress their standard of requirement of cleanliness, tastefulness and comfort, yet not in sufficient numbers to establish a fashionable and luxurious scale of living, such as one finds in Cannes or Mentone. The Pyrenees still belong to the French and Spanish, who appear to enjoy the requirements imposed upon their resorts by the English, and who yet hold them as their own and enjoy them in their own un-athletic and non-strenuous fashion.

I used to study with much interest, from my vine-embowered balcony in the Angleterre, typical groups of the Latin race as they would sit under the great trees in the park below hour after hour, perfectly content, perfectly inactive, with a little sewing or reading for diversion. A cup of *café noir* after lunch or dinner seemed the acme of dissipation, and a short stroll in the cool of the

evening all-sufficient exercise. From my note-book I subjoin a few immediate impressions of Argelès, taken on the spot.

Argelès seems to try to have some sort of a water cure, as is the Pyrenean fashion, but I think no one takes the "Hygienic Institute" at the foot of our park seriously. This is a place to come for an exquisite country setting, delicious mountain air, superlatively beautiful scenery. Also as the place where the four winds meet which will blow you whither you would go in the High Pyrenees: north, up the valley to Lourdes, or west through the Val d'Arrens to the Pic du Balitous, or due south by the Gorge du Cauterets to Cauteret, or by following the Gave de Pau a little east of south, all the way to that awful barrier beyond which lies Spain. — the Cirque de Gavarnie.

Every day, in fine, in Argelès one can take a different excursion, each grander, or of a more exquisite beauty than the last. It seems to me difficult to praise this place too strongly in this regard. The immediate surroundings are comparatively unspectacular, but always there are sweet scents of new mown hay, sweet sounds of bird-notes and of running water, green pastures of indescribable, dream-like loveliness, and, in

every direction, half an hour brings you into the solemn presence of the great snowy peaks.

Our fairly childish delight in running water was never so full-filled as in the Pyrenees; and here in this valley we are almost wild over the delicious manner of irrigating the meadows. There are endless channels cut through all the fields; at intervals small sluice gates are set, consisting of pieces of slate, edge downward. From the mountain torrents which abound everywhere, miniature canals are led off to the various farms, and from these the water is conveyed at will into these tiny channels. Thus we spent one afternoon in a rich green meadow, on the bank of the Gave, sitting in the grass, watching the snow peaks between stately poplars; the next day we took our way to the same spot, but behold, the entire meadow was flooded, marked like a chess-board with the criss-crossing runlets of sparkling water, whose channels we had not even noted on the preceding day.

Yesterday we made the tour of the valley. It was thunder weather and a splendid sky; no sun and no heat, although we are as far south as the Riviera and it is mid-July. First we drove through our beloved green pastures of Argelès and then entered a noble chestnut forest. A few min-

utes' drive brought us up to the extremely quaint village of St. Savin. We left the carriage here and from a rude belvedere obtained a perfectly superb view; then visited the very interesting tenth century church. Here had come, according to all legends, Charlemagne; had defended and endowed this little mountain shrine. We are often, here in the Pyrenees, coming upon the tracks of the great king; the very mountains perpetuate his memory in their names.

From St. Savin we drove on to Pierrefitte and there crossed the valley and came to the ruined castle of Beaucens. Soon we began to have thrilling glimpses into the three mighty gorges: the Gorge d'Arrens, the Gorge du Cauterets and the Gorge du Luz. Between these last two rose the great cone of Viscos, blue as sapphire in the thunder-cloud light, soft as velvet and symmetrical as a pyramid of Egypt. The sun was shooting gigantic shafts of light athwart the summits above Arrens, shafts which smote upon the violet and azure slopes of the nearer mountains and touched the snows of those afar to an almost intolerable glory. And all the while the river ran and made music between the green pastures of Argelès.

On another day we ran up to Cauterets which we found unattractive just as Luchon had proved

BRIDGE OF NAPOLEON III, ST. SAUVEUR.

to be. I love Belloc for saying of these most famous resorts things like this: "Eaux Chaudes is dreary, sad, gloomy, expensive. Eaux Bonnes is crowded with the rich and the rich always spoil things. Argelès is a very different place. Cauterets is as bad as Eaux Bonnes and worse. Bigorre better, but in the same line."

Our great expedition, our "king delight" has been the day spent in going to Gavarnie. Part way to Luz the journey was the same as that to Cauterets: rail to Pierrefitte, electric tram to Luz. At Pierrefitte our line diverged from that to Cauterets and, reaching Luz, we engaged a good coachman with victoria and stout horses. Thus fitted out we drove over a bridge and struck into the long street of St. Sauveur. The site of this delightful little town impressed us as of surpassing loveliness and we dream of a return and a whole week on that mountain terrace. Driving on perforce we crossed the magnificent bridge built by Napoleon III in 1860. The single span is of a hundred and fifty feet and the height above the stream over two hundred. The royal monogram and eagles bring to mind Napoleon's brief day of glory, but the glory of the hills to which this noble arch forms a portal, is everlasting. It was just after the battles of Magenta and Solferino and the craven peace of Villafranca that

Napoleon sought these solitudes for rest. The chapel and monument which confronted us at St. Sauveur were built by him in memory of the French soldiers who fell in the battle of Solferino.

After crossing the Pont Napoleon we entered the Gorge of St. Sauveur and the scenery grew ever more imposing, as the great Vignemale rose to dominate the scene. Before reaching Gèdre the vast amphitheatre of the Cirque de Gavarnie was unfolded in the distance beyond, — a stupendous buttressed wall, snow-whitened, cutting the sky with a sublime outline rendered positively dramatic at this point by the Brèche de Roland. This famous cleft in the mountain summit is at a height of ninety-two hundred feet; it is one hundred and thirty to one hundred and ninety feet wide, and more than three hundred feet deep. Having made the acquaintance of Knight Roland's famous sword, Durandal, at Roc-Amadour, where its counterfeit still cuts a good deal of rock, we were inclined to accept this mighty cut without dispute. Why not? The whole scene called for men of giant mould and surely Charlemagne was entitled to a more or less extraordinary nephew.

As we drove on past Gèdre we paused again to gaze at a scene of incomparable loveliness. Rising from the road was a succession of terraced

meadows lifted up on the lower mountain slopes, as smooth as velvet, being just mown, and of emerald green. Half way up to the thatched and gabled farmhouse stood a group of red-sashed men and white-kerchiefed women, busy with rakes, loading the fresh hay on a cart drawn by two great cream-white oxen, as beautiful as those of the Roman Campagna, standing dignified and patient.

In the midst of the meadow gushed forth a stream of water, which broke into a glittering cascade amid the clover tops and butterflies, leaped to a lower terrace and thence dashed down to the Gave which ran beside our road. Around the farmhouse were grouped the out-buildings, their roofs singularly picturesque, richly covered with green moss. Towering above the picture rose the snowy Pic de Piméné, while the slopes on either side the hayfields were covered with great forest trees, their trunks thick with ivy. I have tried to observe this picture in detail because it is thoroughly typical of Pyrenean scenery, having the sublimity, if not the awfulness, of the Alps in the background, and in the foreground the exquisite verdure and beauty which we associate with an English park.

Arrived at Gavarnie, we hardly dared lift our eyes to the colossal Cirque until luncheon was

over, instinctively feeling that its greatness would overpower us. I confess to finding the strings of donkey women and the little flutter of tourists around the inn *des Voyageurs* rather a relief to my mind, while the jars upon jars of magnificent mountain iris standing everywhere about in the inn parlour and *salle-à-manger* gave the touch of colour which one needs in the solemn sternness of Gavarnie.

On donkeys, each with a swarthy donkey-woman to lead, we started out, luncheon over, to approach as nearly as might be to that rampart of lofty mountains which here shuts Spain from France. Before us, height above height, all capped with snow, all cut by cascades tearing their way through every passage possible, rose the mighty wall. We reached the Pont du Neige, below which the Gave de Gavarnie breaks its way, and dismounted to seek varying points of observation, each one adding to the sense of overmastering grandeur. The wild torrents and thundering waterfalls, the everlasting snows, the chaotic and fantastic rock formations, the awful sweep of terraces ascending to the majestic sky-line all produced their inevitable impression. Adding to this the impressions of the drive hither, through the gorges, we do not hesitate to give the award of the superlative degree to this excursion.

We left Argelès, and most unwillingly, at four of a July afternoon and in less than a half hour reached Lourdes. On the way down the lovely valley we were much interested in talking with Señor Roderiguez, a Spanish manufacturer whom we had met at the Angleterre. He told us of his daughter who was seriously ill and was staying at *Eaux Bonnes*. "But she does not care for taking the waters, or for doctors," he said, "or for any of these cures. She is very religious. She believes that the Virgin will cure her. She has faith. I have to bring her now and again to Lourdes. She remains, perhaps, three days; then she will seem better. Who knows? Such people have faith. For myself, — no, I have not."

We were in Lourdes. The tram in which we took our places to reach the heart of things bore in its panels advertisements like these, which I translate roughly:

"Call for the illuminated Virgins manufactured by ——. Found in all the shops. The only ones durable."

"Pilgrims are invited to visit the Museum of Bernadette and the Panorama of Jerusalem. Grand Cinematograph of the eighteen appearances of the Virgin to Bernadette (*apparitions*). In the same establishment, close to the foot of the Calvary."

"White soap of the Virgin," accompanied by coloured figure of Our Lady of Lourdes with blue sash and halo.

Great is Diana of the Ephesians!

We rattled on in the car through streets lined with small shops crammed full of rosaries, medallions, statuettes, reliefs, all cheap, showy and suggestive of the trappings and toys for sale at Niagara Falls. At length we escaped from these and from the solid ranks of hotels, and leaving the tram made our way to the esplanade. This consists of a vast avenue or park, leading under rows of trees up to the Basilica, the Church of the Rosary, the Grotto, the baths and the taps. On our left, below a stone parapet flowed the Gave du Pau; on our right, screened by trees, rose the town.

We approached the Church of the Rosary, passing numbers of bath-chairs lined up in waiting, and entered the very new and very modern Byzantine building. Service was at the moment closing, and many were flocking to the confessionals which line the interior. A certain holiday and social atmosphere pervaded the place, although there were many obvious invalids; but stout, red-faced priests bustled about and seemed to diffuse, as far as they could, a spirit of *bonhomie* and good cheer. We were not interested and came

at once out of the church and repaired to the Grotto, stopping on the way for a draught of water from the miraculous spring of the Virgin. The shop of the Catholic Alliance, gay with prints, transparencies, candles and images, — "objects of religion" but of this particular cult exclusively, — was passed and we reached the far-famed Grotto.

What did we see? A wide, shallow cavern, barred across with an iron railing; within, an altar with smoking, flaring candles, and in a niche in the smoke-blackened wall of rock above, the familiar, white-robed, blue-sashed figure of Our Lady of Lourdes. At the left upper corner of the irregular archway were suspended hundreds of crutches, braces, and other surgical appliances, — the alleged discards of the cured. *Ay di me!* as Carlyle would have said. On the right was a pulpit.

With others we passed through an iron gate into the Grotto. The floor was dangerously slippery from the dripping wax of thousands of candles set in an enormous branched frame of iron. Hundreds of letters addressed to the Virgin lay on the greasy pavement. A small portable organ completed the appointments of the Grotto. The smoke and the smell of the candles, the lingering odour of incense, the inherent sordidness of the

place were insupportable and we hurried out and between the rows of benches to the purity of the river and the sky. Then we looked back and saw what makes this place tolerable, but also intolerable, — the people. There were not many gathered at that hour, less than a hundred, but on all faces was the stamp of fervid devotion and mortal anxiety. Priests and nuns, working men and delicate women of fashion, men of the world and men from the farm knelt on the pavement facing the image of the Virgin, praying in utter absorption and indifference to those around them. Many of the supplicants knelt with arms extended straight on either side and sustained that position for a length of time, interrupted only as they bent to kiss the pavement before them.

It was not a day of any important pilgrimage, but a large company of Germans had arrived in the morning and we heard their language on every side. Visiting the shop of the Catholic Alliance for photographs, I was interested in seeing a book entitled " The Enemies of Lourdes," by a German physician. I found that it was an answer to some objections to the enterprise of the Fathers of the Assumption, and asked the salesman if Zola's " Lourdes " were discussed.

" Oh, no," the man answered, negligently,

"this book deals only with important matters. That is a work of no importance."

I had a great desire to seek out the Hotel of *Henri IV et du Sacré Cœur Réunis* for dinner on account of the delightful surprise of its name, but it seemed far to seek, and we turned in at the Hotel Moderne instead. Its name was certainly not its strong point, but this we found was its *cuisine*, on the whole, perhaps, not less important.

We hurried back to visit the Basilica, dinner over, and found a beautiful Gothic church with good glass, wholly modern, like the one below it. Every foot of the wall was covered with *ex-votos*, gilded hearts, medallions, banners. We were naturally reminded of the *Chapelle Miraculeuse* at Roc-Amadour. All the while I think we unconsciously contrasted the ancient and the modern pilgrim shrine, and inevitably found Roc-Amadour more appealing. This was possibly because its complete mediaevalism sustains in a way its cycle of venerable legends, while the crass modernity of the legend of Bernadette and the eighteen *apparitions* of the Virgin in the year 1858, unites with the undisguised commercialism of the management of Lourdes to destroy the faintest sense of mystery or illusion.

When we came from the Basilica twilight was falling in the valley; a shower had purified the

air, and the stars were coming out in the depth of the violet sky. We walked down to the Grotto and found it gained much in effect by the dusk, as its unimpressive proportions were less evident, and its candlelight, thrown upon the figure of the Virgin, was striking. People were now gathering rapidly and a responsive service was being intoned by companies of German priests. Torches were being lighted at the candlestick within the Grotto railing and handed out to those waiting outside.

The service ended, the priests, in number perhaps thirty, advanced, torches in hand, in single file, and the pilgrims fell into line after them, the men on the right, the women on the left. The numbers grew with astonishing rapidity, fresh bands coming to swell the ranks as the procession moved forward. In the end the number may have been five hundred; very often it is several thousands and on the occasion of the great pilgrimages the throng becomes enormous. The national pilgrimage takes place on the twentieth of August.

The procession moved on slowly, and we followed. Most of those in line carried hymn books as well as torches, and the chanting of the Canticle of Bernadette in German rang out upon the quiet air, each couplet followed by the *Ave, Ave, Ave*

Maria, flung back and forth in perpetual, fervent iteration. The translator of Zola's "Lourdes" thus renders a few of the couplets in English:

"It was the hour of evening prayer;
Soft bells chimed on the chilly air,
Ave, ave, ave Maria!

"The maid stood on the torrent's bank;
The breeze arose, then swiftly sank.

"And she beheld, e'en as it fell,
The Virgin on Massabielle.

"All white appeared the lady chaste,
A zone of heaven around her waist," etc.

The procession, having reached the esplanade before the Basilica, began slowly ascending to its level by way of the grand, arched stone incline which leads up in a splendid semi-circular sweep to the stately porch. Soon the entire double line of the approach with the façade of the Basilica was illuminated by the torches and from the height above us the Canticle rang down in softer harmony. Just at the proper moment the great statue of the Virgin facing the Basilica from across the esplanade, leaped into vivid, coloured light from hundreds of bulbs resembling lilies. The whole scene at that moment was more acutely striking than can be imagined or described; but above all the impression was theatrical.

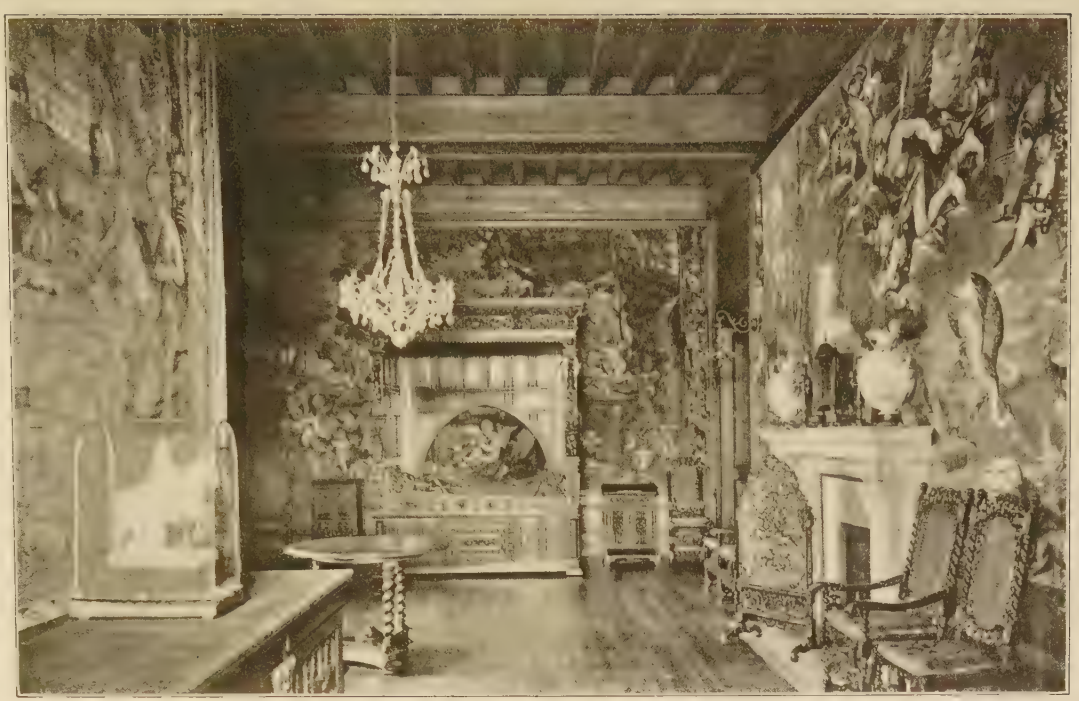
As they came down from the Basilica we stood in the very teeth of the procession and met the big, burly, authoritative priests face to face. They were singing now with a kind of passionate ardour, infusing a higher and higher degree of excitement and expectancy into the minds of the humble people who followed them.

We turned then and came away. Our train would soon be leaving and I think we were not sorry.

As we drew out of the station the outline of a great cross, studded with electric lights, flamed against the sky from the hill above the town, and looked down upon the throbbing hearts of the way-worn, suppliant pilgrims, and the silent and passionless images.

We are at Pau.

Pau is gracious, suave, superb, gay. In Pau one can live and one can be amused by the pride of life or thrilled by the majesty of nature as suits one's mood. The mountains are magnificent but they do not intrude. They remain upon the horizon. Close at hand are palaces, gardens and pleasure grounds. Yet these do not insist upon or monopolize attention. History and legend, the storm and stress of life, can be called back or not, as one will. There is no sea. There is no



BED-CHAMBER OF QUEEN OF NAVARRE, PAU.

wind. There is a curious sense of satisfaction and of shelter.

Another spirit dominates here; a spirit blithe, valiant, debonair; free, bold and hardy. We are on the confines of Navarre and in the heart of Gascony. Gone are the stately figures of Hannibal, Caesar, Vercingetorix, the " huge, pathetic kings " of the great past; gone are Charlemagne and Roland, René and Jeanne of Provence; gone the mighty Counts and Crusaders; gone the great Popes and War-lords of the *Moyen Age*.

In Pau we look over into other times, other morals, and the man whose name meets us at every hand, the man with whose name we may conjure, is a Prince of the Pyrenees, with all the spirit and fire of the mountains upon him, and something of their majesty.

With Henry of Navarre, born in the Chateau of Pau and bred a hardy mountaineer, the story of Old France closes, giving place to the story of the seventeenth century.

THE END.

APPENDIX

LETTER FROM THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE OF LYONS AND VIENNE TO THEIR FRIENDS IN ASIA MINOR, SECOND CENTURY

"THE servants of Christ, dwelling at Vienne and Lyons in Gaul, to the brethren settled in Asia and Phrygia, who have the same faith and hope of redemption that we have, peace, grace, and glory from God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord!

"None can tell to you in speech or fully set forth to you in writing the weight of our misery, the madness and rage of the Gentiles against the saints, and all that hath been suffered by the blessed martyrs. Our enemy doth rush upon us with all the fury of his powers, and already giveth us a foretaste and the first fruits of all the license with which he doth intend to set upon us. He hath omitted nothing for the training of his agents against us, and he doth exercise them in a sort of preparatory work against the servants of the Lord. Not only are we driven

from the public buildings, from the baths, and from the forum, but it is forbidden to all our people to appear publicly in any place whatsoever.

" The grace of God hath striven for us against the devil: at the same time it hath sustained the weak, it hath opposed to the Evil One, as it were, pillars of strength — men strong and valiant, ready to draw on themselves all his attacks. They have had to bear all manner of insult; they have deemed but a small matter that which others find hard and terrible; and they have thought only of going to Christ, proving by their example that the sufferings of this world are not worthy to be put in the balance with the glory which is to be manifested in us. They have endured, in the first place, all the outrages that could be heaped upon them by the multitude, outcries, blows, thefts, spoliation, imprisonment, all that the fury of the people could devise against hated enemies. Then, dragged to the forum by the military tribune and the magistrates of the city, they have been questioned before the people and cast into prison until the coming of the governor. He, from the moment our people appeared before him, committed all manner of violence against them. Then stood forth one of our brethren, Vettius Epagathus, full of love towards God and his neighbour, living a life so pure and strict that,

young as he was, men held him to be the equal of the aged Zacharias. . . . He could not bear that judgment so unjust should go forth against us, and, moved with indignation, he asked leave to defend his brethren, and to prove that there was in them no kind of irreligion or impiety. Those present at the tribunal, amongst whom he was known and celebrated, cried out against him, and the governor himself, enraged at so just a demand, asked him no more than this question, 'Art thou a Christian?' Straightway with a loud voice, he declared himself a Christian, and was placed amongst the number of the martyrs. . . .

"Afterwards, the rest began to be examined and classed. The first, firm and well prepared, made hearty and solemn confession of their faith. Others, ill prepared and with little firmness, showed that they lacked strength for such a fight. About ten of them fell away, which caused us incredible pain and mourning. Their example broke down the courage of others, who, not being yet in bonds, though they had already had much to suffer, kept close to the martyrs, and withdrew not out of their sight. Then were we all stricken with dread for the issue of the trial: not that we had great fear of the torments inflicted, but because, prophesying the result according to the degree of courage of the accused,

we feared much falling away. They took, day by day, those of our brethren who were worthy to replace the weak; so that all the best of the two Churches, those whose care and zeal had founded them, were taken and confined. They took, likewise, some of our slaves, for the governor had ordered that they should be all summoned to attend in public; and they, fearing the torments they saw the Saints undergo, and instigated by the soldiers, accused us falsely of odious deeds, such as the banquet of Thyestes, the incest of Oedipus, and other crimes which must not be named or even thought of, and which we cannot bring ourselves to believe that men were ever guilty of. These reports having once spread amongst the people, even those persons who had hitherto, by reason, perhaps, of relationship, shown moderation towards us, burst forth into bitter indignation against our people. Thus was fulfilled that which had been prophesied by the Lord: 'The time cometh when whosoever shall kill you shall think that he doeth God service.' Since that day the holy martyrs have suffered tortures that no words can express.

"The fury of the multitude, of the governor and of the soldiers, fell chiefly upon Sanctus, a deacon of Vienne; upon Maturus, a neophyte still, but already a valiant champion of Christ;

upon Attalus also, born at Pergamus, but who hath ever been one of the pillars of our church; upon Blandina, lastly, in whom Christ hath made it appear that persons who seem vile and despised of men are just those whom God holds in the highest honour by reason of the excellent love they bear Him, which is manifested in their firm virtue and not in vain show. All of us, and even Blandina's mistress here below, who fought valiantly with the other martyrs, feared that this poor slave, so weak of body, would not be in a condition to freely confess her faith; but she was sustained by such vigour of soul that the executioners, who from morn till eve put her to all manner of torture, failed in their efforts, and declared themselves beaten, not knowing what further punishment to inflict, and marvelling that she still lived, with her body pierced through and through, and torn piecemeal by so many tortures, of which a single one should have sufficed to kill her. But the blessed saint, like a valiant athlete, took fresh courage and strength from the confession of her faith; all feeling of pain vanished, and ease returned to her at the mere utterance of the words, 'I am a Christian, and no evil is wrought amongst us.'

"When the tyrants had thus expended and exhausted their tortures against the firmness of

the martyrs sustained by Christ, the devil devised other contrivances. They were cast into the darkest and most unendurable place in their prison; their feet were dragged out and compressed to the utmost tension of the muscles; the gaolers, as if instigated by a demon, tried every sort of torture, insomuch that several of them for whom God willed such an end, died of suffocation in prison. Others, who had been tortured in such a manner that it was thought impossible they should long survive, deprived as they were of every remedy and aid from men, but supported nevertheless by the grace of God, remained sound and strong in body as in soul, and comforted and re-animated their brethren. . . .

"The blessed Pothinus, who held at that time the bishopric of Lyons, being upwards of ninety, and so weak in body that he could hardly breathe, was himself brought before the tribunal, so worn with old age and sickness that he seemed nigh to extinction; but he still possessed his soul, wherewith to subserve the triumph of Christ. Being brought by the soldiers before the tribunal, whither he was accompanied by all the magistrates of the city and the whole populace, that pursued him with hootings, he offered, as if he had been the very Christ, the most glorious

testimony. At a question from the governor, who asked what the God of the Christians was, he answered, 'If thou be worthy, thou shalt know.' He was immediately raised up, without any respect or humanity, and blows were showered upon him; those who happened to be nearest to him assaulted him grievously with foot and fist, without the slightest regard for his age; those who were farther off cast at him whatever was to their hand; they would all have thought themselves guilty of the greatest default if they had not done their best, each on his own score, to insult him brutally. They believed they were avenging the wrongs of their gods. Pothinus, still breathing, was cast again into prison, and two days after yielded up his spirit.

"Then were manifested a singular dispensation of God and the immeasurable compassion of Jesus Christ: an example rare amongst brethren, but in accord with the intentions and the justice of the Lord. All those who, at their first arrest had denied their faith, were themselves cast into prison and given over to the same sufferings as the other martyrs, for their denial did not serve them at all. Those who had made profession of being what they really were — that is, Christians — were imprisoned without being accused of other crimes. The former, on the contrary, were con-

fined as homicides and wretches, thus suffering double punishment. The one sort found repose in the honourable joys of martyrdom, in the hope of promised blessedness, in the love of Christ, and in the spirit of God the Father; the other were a prey to the reproaches of conscience. It was easy to distinguish the one from the other by their looks. The one walked joyously, bearing on their faces a majesty mingled with sweetness, and their very bonds seemed unto them an ornament, even as the broidery that decks a bride; . . . the other, with downcast eyes and humble and dejected air, were an object of contempt to the Gentiles themselves, who regarded them as cowards who had forfeited the glorious and saving name of Christians. And so they who were present at this double spectacle were thereby signally strengthened, and whoever amongst them chanced to be arrested confessed the faith without doubt or hesitation. . . .

"Things having come to this pass, different kinds of death were inflicted on the martyrs, and they offered to God a crown of divers flowers. It was but right that the most valiant champions, those who had sustained a double assault and gained a signal victory, should receive a splendid crown of immortality. The neophyte Maturus and the deacon Sanctus, Blandina and Attalus,

then, were led into the amphitheatre, and thrown to the beasts, as a sight to please the inhumanity of the Gentiles. . . . Maturus and Sanctus there underwent all kinds of tortures, as if they had hitherto suffered nothing; or, rather, like athletes, who had already been several times victorious, and were contending for the crown of thorns, they braved the stripes with which they were beaten, the bites of the beasts that dragged them to and fro, and all that was demanded by the outcries of an insensate mob, so much the more furious because it could by no means overcome the firmness of the martyrs or extort from Sanctus any other speech than that which, on the first day, he had uttered: 'I am a Christian.' After this fearful contest, as life was not extinct, their throats were at last cut, when they alone had thus been offered as a spectacle to the public instead of the variety displayed in the combat of gladiators. Blandina, in her turn, tied to a stake, was given to the beasts; she was seen hanging, as it were, on a sort of cross, calling upon God with trustful fervour, and the brethren present were reminded, in the person of a sister, of Him who had been crucified for their salvation. . . . As none of the beasts would touch the body of Blandina, she was released from the stake, taken back to prison, and reserved for another occasion.

. . . Attalus, whose execution, seeing that he was a man of mark, was furiously demanded by the people, came forward ready to brave everything, as a man deriving confidence from the memory of his life, for he had courageously trained himself to discipline, and had always amongst us borne witness for the truth. He was led all around the amphitheatre, preceded by a board bearing this inscription in Latin: 'This is Attalus the Christian.' The people pursued him with the most furious hootings; but the governor, having learnt that he was a Roman citizen, had him taken back to prison with the rest. Having subsequently written to Caesar, he waited for his decision as to those who were thus detained.

"This delay was neither useless nor unprofitable, for then shone forth the boundless compassion of Christ. Those of the brethren who had been but dead members of the Church, were recalled to life by the pains and help of the living; the martyrs obtained grace for those who had fallen away; and great was the joy in the Church, at the same time virgin and mother, for she once more found living those whom she had given up for dead. Thus revived and strengthened by the goodness of God, who willeth not the death of the sinner, but rather inviteth him to repentance, they presented themselves before the tribunal, to

be questioned by the governor. Caesar had replied that they who confessed themselves to be Christians should be put to the sword, and they who denied sent away safe and sound. When the time for the great market had fully come, there assembled a numerous multitude from every nation and every province. The governor had the blessed martyrs brought up before his judgment seat, showing them before the people with all the pomp of a theatre. He questioned them afresh; and those who were discovered to be Roman citizens were beheaded, the rest were thrown to the beasts.

" Great glory was gained for Christ by means of those who had at first denied their faith, and who now confessed it contrary to the expectations of the Gentiles. Those who, having been privately questioned, declared themselves Christians, were added to the number of the martyrs. Those in whom appeared no vestige of faith, and no fear of God, remained without the pale of the Church. When they were dealing with those who had been reunited to it, one Alexander, a Phrygian by nation, a physician by profession, who had for many years been dwelling in Gaul, a man well known to all for his love of God and open preaching of the faith, took his place in the hall of judgment, exhorting

by signs all who filled it to confess their faith, even as if he had been called on to deliver them of it. The multitude, enraged to see that those who had at first denied turned round and proclaimed their faith, cried out against Alexander, whom they accused of the conversion. The governor forthwith asked him what he was, and at the answer, 'I am a Christian,' condemned him to the beasts. On the morrow Alexander was again brought up, together with Attalus, whom the governor, to please the people, had once more condemned to the beasts. After they had both suffered in the amphitheatre all the torments that could be devised, they were put to the sword. Alexander uttered not a complaint, not a word; he had the air of one who was talking inwardly with God. Attalus, seated on an iron seat, and waiting for the fire that was to consume his body, said, in Latin, to the people, 'See what you are doing; it is in truth devouring men; as for us we devour not men, and we do no evil at all.' He was asked what was the name of God. 'God,' said he, 'is not like us mortals; He hath no name.'

"After all these martyrs, on the last day of the shows, Blandina was again brought up, together with a young lad, named Ponticus, about fifteen years old. They had been brought

up every day before that they might see the tortures of their brethren. When they were called upon to swear by the altars of the Gentiles, they remained firm in their faith, making no account of those pretended gods, and so great was the fury of the multitude against them, that no pity was shown for the age of the child or the sex of the woman. Tortures were heaped upon them; they were made to pass through every kind of torment, but the desired end was not gained. Supported by the exhortations of his sister, who was seen and heard by the Gentiles, Ponticus, after having endured all magnanimously, gave up the ghost. Blandina, last of all — like a noble mother that hath roused the courage of her sons for the fight, and sent them forth to conquer for their king — passed once more through all the tortures they had suffered, anxious to go and rejoin them, and rejoicing at each step towards death. At length, after she had undergone fire, the talons of beasts, and agonizing aspersion, she was wrapped in a network and thrown to a bull that tossed her in the air; she was already unconscious of all that befell her, and seemed altogether taken up with watching for the blessings that Christ had in store for her. Even the Gentiles allowed that never a woman had suffered so much or so long.

"Still their fury and their cruelty towards the saints was not appeased. They devised another way of raging against them; they cast to the dogs the bodies of those who had died of suffocation in prison, and watched night and day that none of our brethren might come and bury them. As for what remained of the martyrs' half mangled or devoured corpses, they left them exposed under a guard of soldiers, coming to look on them with insulting eyes, and saying, 'Where is now their God? Of what use to them was this religion for which they laid down their lives?' We were overcome with grief that we were not able to bury these poor corpses; nor the darkness of night, nor gold, nor prayers could help us to succeed therein. After being thus exposed for six days in the open air, given over to all manner of outrage, the corpses of the martyrs were at last burned, reduced to ashes, and cast hither and thither, by the infidels, upon the waters of the Rhone, that there might be left no trace of them on earth. They acted as if they had been more mighty than God, and could rob our brethren of their resurrection: 'Tis in that hope,' said they, 'that these folk bring among us a new and strange religion, that they set at naught the most painful torments, and that they go joyfully to face death: let us see if they will rise again, if their God will come to

their aid, and will be able to tear them from our hands.' " — *From Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, Fourth Century A. D.*

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